Nidome no Yuusha

Web Novel

Series information

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Synopsis

Ukei Kaito, the protagonist who desperately saved the world after being summoned in another world as a hero to defeat the Demon Lord.

Though he did defeat the demon lord and saved the world, but he was betrayed by the people he trusted as friends and is stabbed to death by a sword.

At that time, he swore.

If there is a next time, he would no longer cling to the word called 'believe'.

If there is a next time, he would pay them back as cruelly as possible.

If there is a next time, he wouldn't make another mistake.

「I… All of you… I will absolutely kill you all……」

After leaving his last words, he died.

And then a voice resounded.

……【 System Message: Tutorial Mode has ended. 】.

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Chapter 1/Prologue
The Hero swore revenge

Underhanded, repulsive and detestable… I feel sick.

Every time I look around, each and every person is the same.

They betray while smiling, trample on good intentions while grinning, and administer poison while laughing loudly.

I feel like an idiot for trying desperately to save people like them, but without being able to rewind the time, I can only feel depressed.

It could be said that I am responsible for getting deceived, that's why this conclusion is only natural. However, if someone says I should accept it, then heck no.

「……. We did it.」

「Geez, you're a monster, really.」

「It's finally over. All evil is purified in accordance to God's will.」

While the source of life is spilling on the sword stabbed in my chest, my former friends, no, people I thought as friends surround me.

This is without a doubt a punishment, punishment to the me who blindly clung to the word 'believe'.

Therefore, if there is a second time, I won't make any mistakes then for sure.

Therefore, if there is a next time, I'll definitely kill.

I'll kill the princess, I'll kill the knights, I'll kill the villagers, I'll kill the sorcerers, I'll kill the soldiers, I'll kill the Saints, I'll kill the martial artists, I'll kill the assassins, I'll kill the dancers, I'll kill the merchants, I'll kill the King, I'll kill the Queen, I'll kill the nobles.

I will massacre them all, in the most cruel way; in the most sadistic way.

I will keep it engraved in the deepest, deepest, deepest part of my heart, so I wouldn't forget it in the next life.

【 System Message: Holy Sword of Vengeance unlocked. 】

As my consciousness starts to fade, such a voice was heard. But my body won't budge even a little bit, I can't do anything.

『Hey, I wonder where did we make a blunder… What should we have done, to live in that game-like time forever……, or maybe, there was nothing we could've done… I wish it turned out differently……』

And then, I remember at the end of the killing, one woman killed another. She too was pierced the same way I was, laughing at her own helplessness, that woman was referred to as the Demon Lord.

「kukuku… ahahaha-ugguukku… bwahahahahaha!!」

A mouthful of blood mixed with her laughter. It truly is a hilarious story, the enemy of the world, the enemy they told us to fight who was considered the hero's true nemesis was the only person that didn't tell a lie. The pierrot was dancing a bit more longer.

「Tch, I don't wanna die yet!」

「No, he doesn't have any power to stand anymore. But, the purification of evil will take a little time.」

「That's right, he can't even glare at us anymore..」

While feeling like they were about to laugh again, thoughts were suddenly surging.

Since he already lost too much blood, pretty thoughts were not settled there. Therefore, words that were engraved only by instinct came out.

「Ah… all of you, I'll absolutely kill all of you by all means…… 」

Kachick- The sound confirmed the total depletion of his HP, and his consciousness sank into the bottom of the dark abyss.

I, Ukei Kaito died.

☆

【 System Message: Tutorial Mode has ended.

Time Elapsed: 4 years, 112 days, 17 hours, 52 minutes and 35 seconds.

Experience(level) is decreasing over time…

Since the retrogression amount exceeds the accumulated experience points, resetting level to initial value, a deficit of- 20,000 is pooled.

Setting experience point to be locked at level 10.

Retrogression amount exceeded the deficit limit.

Revoking skills which fit to the retrogression amount it exceeds- retrogression process executed.

Retrogression of skills, revoking success. Skills were fully initialized.

Because retrogression amount exceeds skill, attempting retrogression process by revoking the special skill「Spirit Sword」.
…… Attempt failed due to the effects of【Holy Sword of Vengeance】.

Revocation process cancelled, moving on to attempt sealing the key amount of experience points.

Sealing process success. 53 of 58 forms of「Spirit Sword」was sealed.

Offsetting of the excess retrogression amount has ended.

Preparing retrogression to start mode…

…

… Complete.

Commencing retrogression to start mode.】

Chapter 2
The Hero strikes for the time being

「Welcome, thank you for coming, Hero-sa… ga~fu!」

As I opened my eyes, the object of hatred right before me took a full hit.

My fist intuitively punched out and hit the pit of her stomach with my full might. Princess Alesia Aurelia's silver hair swayed and she staggered a few steps back, crouching down and holding her stomach.

I actually wanted to aim at the face, but because I was lying down, my fist didn't reach it, and the brunt of the blow wasn't fully delivered.

「HER HIGHNESS!!」「PRINCESS!!」

Unable to understand the situation at hand, the knights were momentarily dumbfounded and rushed to the princess' aid in panic. Some immediately chanted low-class healing spells and a faint light wrapped around the princess.

Seeing that spectacle, I wasn't satisfied at all.

Even though I didn't use any weapons, though it was a partial hit without any strength, reinforcement magic nor blessings, I couldn't understand how she took my blow directly without any equipment and got off with just this.

When a question pops out, more questions about the current situation instantly follow.

「Uhh… oh? Where the heck am I? Is this a dream? A revolving lantern?」

Though I should've died, I didn't see anything wrong with my body when I looked down.

Neither the trace nor mark of the sword「Deus Slayer」that should've been struck in my chest can be found, not even on the clothes I was wearing.

It was more than 4 years ago, this black clothing I had when I went on a journey in this world for the first time.

It was the uniform of the high school, I, Ukei Kaito was attending.

「You bastard, what the heck did you do!!」

「Even though you are the hero, you can't harm the princess!!」

Though the knights quickly pointed their swords at me, their pressure didn't bare any killing intent. They must've thought I was still inexperienced at fighting, so the pressure they emit was like a gentle breeze.

I ignored it and promptly tried to grasp the current situation.

I should be at the summoning area inside the castle in the royal capital based on my surroundings.

Just a while ago, I was in the deepest part of Ryuudouden in the depths of the unexplored region, The Dragon's Tomb.

It should be so far away that the linear distance is 10,000 kilometers. Assuming transfer magic was used, you'd have to do a long-distance transfer more than 10 times, it'll be so impossible that even the Demon Lord who took pride in her absurd amount of magical power can't do it in one go.

Then it must be my life flashing before me like a revolving lantern… Nah, illusions which could be considered as reliving one's life are definitely impossible.

Since that dream, it hits me and this hostility that I sensed gradually resurfaced.

If this wasn't a dream or a revolving lantern, I unfortunately still couldn't come up with an explanation for the current situation.

「Oi, are you listening!?」

「Not really.」

「Wh!? You bastard!!」

Like a slap in their face, the annoying knight's cheap pride got damaged with a half-hearted answer. His hostility turned into real bloodlust and pointed his sword.

On the contrary, the serious bloodlust that turns to me becomes like soft warmth for the moment.

While they're thinking that I wasn't really that strong because of that half-hearted answer softening them up, my body reacted and rushed over to them.

「Eh? Wh-!?」

I stepped on his foot and I struck my elbow into his throat, carrying all my weight. I didn't hold back in any of my movements.

I was summoned as the hero for three years.

After defeating the Demon Lord, I was chased for a year, being pursued by the world as a sacrifice in the post-war recovery.

If one is not accustomed to dealing fatal blows and hesitates, then they wouldn't have that long to live.

Furthermore, the knights had stopped moving at the unexpected scene. The guy who came at me slammed into the wall, with a partially crushed windpipe, and was now foaming at the mouth. His body loosened and he was stumbling.

「Ah? The neck was not blown off. Errr~… Was his neck protected by spirit strengthening? Nah, I didn't feel that kind of magic used though… Rather, my body feels heavy? Hmmmm?」

A dead silence fills the room and only my voice was heard.

No matter how skilled or strong he was, even though he seemed strong or an expert. Though I didn't use any sort of weapon, it's difficult to think that it was ineffective.

Supposedly, his neck should've been twisted and turned with a *kruryuk*- sound. But in reality, that didn't happen.

「L-Lauren!!」

In a few seconds, the knights broke out of their petrified state and gathered near the fallen knight. They hastily chanted a recovery spell and doused an intermediate healing potion on the fallen knight's throat.

「W-was there something that was unsatisfactory to you, Hero-sa… ma- 」

The Princess barely got those words out, as she was recovering from vomiting with a pale blue face that reached her ears. She was intimidated when the bloodlust that I leaked involuntarily filled the room.
With a pale face and somewhat recovered, the princess barely muttered those words. Hearing her caused my bloodlust to unintentionally leak out, intimidating every person in here.

「You can call it something like that, Alesia. As expected of a princess. I don't like just about everything about you, that voice, those eyes, that figure, that attitude, I don't like it at all. I felt sick just from hearing those words from your mouth.」

A knight felt an overwhelming sense of danger and whipped his trembling body to action. He swapped positions with the princess in order to protect her, but little did he know that it was useless.

Because, I who can move with inhuman speed, was no longer there.

「Kyaarghhh! Uggu~… Kku~…」

I slipped pass through the knights and dashed beside someone, then I grabbed its neck with one hand and smashed it against a wall.

「I was but an innocent man who was selfishly summoned, forced into the role of a hero. If I defeat the Demon Lord again, all that's waiting for me is to be blamed for crimes I did not do, and be betrayed and laughed at.」

「Wh… what do you mean… kuh… huff… 」

Its very clear to me, I will never forget it.

As soon as the Demon Lord was defeated, the world will turn inside out.

The Saints recognized me as the world's enemy, and the kingdom confirmed it. And all of the crimes committed behind the scenes were blamed unto me.

Companions who had fought alongside me, friends who I thought shared a close bond with, all of them will betray me without exception.

Without a doubt, the same guys I saved with just a single cry for help would betray me, will throw stones at me, insult me and spit on me.

This princess was also one of those people.

After I defeat the Demon Lord, the world would become my enemy, and all my allies will disappear.

Among them, the princess will pretend to be an ally. She approaches me saying "I'll help you" and "I'll give you shelter".

Life as a fugitive can get tiring. These dramatic changes can get so exhausting that I easily believed those words of help. Only to then get betrayed and laughed at.

While saying that it was a safe place, I was taken to a teleportation gem, where I can use magic to get in, but not to get out. It was a trap room inside a dungeon.

And when I had barely escaped with my life, I had serious injuries that took a considerable time to heal.

「Ah, when you set me up, your ally, that time you told me "I never betrayed you, from the beginning I was never your ally and it should've been obvious". In the first place, a person from a different world is not a human, didn't you tell me that?」

「Really, I don't know what you're……」

They treated me like an idiot. And the truth was that I was an idiot.

I would've noticed if I had assessed her properly, that she was hiding her enmity of me. If I had just abandoned the word 'believe', then this never would have happened.

Anyhow, I can clearly feel the malice hidden within the princess's heart now. It is clear even though she seems in pain and confused.

Slight gestures, eye-contact, the breathing pattern, the change in expressions.

These are the ways I gain information to predict the thoughts and moves of my opponents in combat. You can never conceal ill-will from me.

「*Sigh*-, you truly have thick mask under your skin. Well, although I don't understand the situation, this doesn't seem to be a dream or a revolving lantern, but either is fine. I'll leave the difficult things for later.」

Ah, I let out my voice unintentionally.

「I don't know how long will this bonus time that I have last… I swear…」

My voice started to overflow with delight, my expression broke out into euphoria very quickly, then my heart started to beat faster causing my arm to brim with excitement and act rashly.

「Aa…… Ugguhk……」

Then, the animosity from the princess withered rapidly.

I released my hold and the grip I had on her neck loosened. She landed on her rear, looking at me with eyes filled with fear. My figure reflected in her eyes and my expression was certainly distorted and disturbing.

But, it's good. It's all good.

I wanted to live in this beautiful world forever. Because it's a world where oneself can become a hero.

But, the ending result of this world was to be betrayed and framed as a criminal. Becoming a laughing stock.

I was of course pure, but not anymore. I was already broken a long time ago.

I swear, I will have revenge.

The face I must've shown to the others must be one filled with insanity, it must counter their idea of honor.

「P-please… H-help……」

「Detestable. Suffer as much as possible, Alesia」

「GYAU!!」

Left, right, left, right… I hit her face until her conscious withered and her face numbed. I hit her so she can suffer as much pain as possible.

「You bastard!, Gya!?」

「Gguuhkk!!」

「Hora! Hora! Hora! Hora!! Your important princess is being beaten to a pulp, can't you do anything about it? Huh!?」
Caught in the moment where the princess was being clobbered, The knights finally moved and sprung into action, I was encircled by 5, no, 6 knights, this much doesn't matter to me though.

I drove my elbow into the joint in the leg of a knight, destroying his center of gravity. I then applied pressure to inflict as much pain as possible, the bone was then twisted and broken. I then proceeded to gouge his eyes, crush his ear, and rip his nose into pieces.

「Ahaha… AHAHAHAHA!!」

As usual, my body felt heavy, sluggish, but there is no need to use the Spirit Sword.

It is unfortunate but they're unworthy to be killed by my Spirit Sword. Also, I did't want to kill.

I want revenge.

I want them to suffer.

I want them to suffer as much as they possibly can.

If I can't, my heart will never know peace.

「AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!!!」

Their screams of pain and fear were like music to my ears, this sensation can't be stopped… it feels too good.

The voice doesn't stop, it wants to torment them until the point of death. If they ever faint, I can just inflict more pain until they wake up again.

It certainly was hell for the knights.
It certainly was hell for the princess.

For me, this was the paradise where all my wishes came true.

The laughter never ends. It will never end.

The screaming never stops. It will never stop.

Chapter 3
The Hero amused himself by stomping

「Aa… ugh, gaah…」

「Higguu… Gguukk, Aagh…」

After a few minutes, the room wasn't filled with words but moans. When her reaction didn't please me anymore no matter what I did, I stopped.

Her face was so disfigured that you wouldn't know who it was upfront. All of her fingers were broken, pointing at odd directions.

Finally, when she couldn't handle anymore beating, she curled up and foamed from her mouth.

「Well then, shall we do it again?」

My desire for revenge isn't going to be quelled with just this, but if she's not showing any reaction or whatsoever from the torture, it'll be meaningless.

When I regained my composure after acting violently, I used a healing magic on Princess Alesia while enduring to impulsively stab the short sword in her.

A small amount of magic was absorbed through my hand, and a faint light welled up. That light was from the【Verdant Green Crystal Sword】.

I obtained this one form of the Spirit Sword when I fulfilled the requirements in the Forest of the Elves.

The short sword is approximately 15 centimeters long and it's like a green crystal. And if some magic is poured in, there will be a healing effect on the target.

However, it's not an instant recovery. So in the meantime, I will recollect my thoughts.

「I thought it was just my imagination, but why does my body feel heavy…」

What I understood during the battle was that my physical ability has evidently deteriorated. Why that happened, I have a few ideas.

「Hmm… Maybe it's a curse?」

What pierced me before, the『Deus Slayer』was a sword that has the ability to steal attributes every time you inflict a wound on the opponent, and that debuff effect is why the

church treasure it. That time when I had equipped it, the effect of my Spirit Sword was nullified.

My inherent skill『Spirit Sword』has the ability to acquire numerous forms every time I meet a certain requirement for my exclusive use.

Those four years weren't for naught, among the many forms that I obtained, there's one that can cure any ailments. So first of all, I have to investigate about how to deal with the sword.

「Status Open」

As if adhering to my voice, a pale semi-transparent board; the status window, emerged.

In there was a list of the attributes of the person who called it. Without using some type of appraisal, skill or magic, they wouldn't be able to see it except me.

In there was amazing information written inside.

Ukei Kaito | 17 years old | Male
HP: 531/545 MP: 347/412 Level: 1
Strength: 224 Stamina: 324 Endurance: 545 Agility: 587 Magic Power: 117 Magic Resistance: 497
Inherent Skills:「Spirit Sword▽」「Language Comprehension」
Skills:『Punch Lv1』
Condition: Excellent

「……What on the earth is this?」

I rubbed my eyes and closed the status window thinking that it was a bug. I shook my head and I opened it again.

「Status Open.」

Ukei Kaito | 17 years old | Male
HP: 531/545 MP: 347/412 Level: 1
Strength: 224 Stamina: 324 Endurance: 545 Agility: 587 Magic Power: 117 Magic Resistance: 497
Inherent Skills:「Spirit Sword▽」「Language Comprehension」
Skills:『Punch Lv1』
Condition: Excellent

「…Why?」

There were many strange attributes so I unintentionally muttered that question.

Firstly, my age.

I was summoned about 4 years ago, when I was in my second year of highschool and I was 17 years old, now I'm 21 years old.

What could've happened? Had some secret technique been activated? Or not?

Well, I don't have any problem with this.

Next was level.

I defeated the Demon Lord, and the experience I gained after fighting her was bountiful. It exceeded above 300 levels, and it rose to nearly level 400. Before departing, the leader of the knights, which was considered to be the Kingdom's strongest person was about level 121, there were also approximately 270 participants during the Demon Lord subjugation, that was also something to consider to know what extent it has risen.

Of course, if my level goes up, the attributes are affected too.

But I've never heard stories where your level decreases, the only case was when you continue to skip training for years.

But I've never heard of a rumor where your level decreases in one go from level 300.

Or rather, in this world only infants are level 1.

Even when I first came to this world, I was at level 3.

And to match my level 1, my attributes had decreased extremely.

And lastly, my skills.

My Perfectionist trait, it's something like a hero correction skill and unlike the inherent skill. If you're suitable and you fulfilled the conditions, then with enough time you can get it.

The skills have proficiency and level. If you train several times they level up, and then you can master it.

Basically you don't have any other choice but to spam the skills until you level up, in other words, my skill『Punch』which I had spammed relentlessly was the fruit of my hard work.

…

「Ahh! Silly me… The『Sky Walk』!!」

The princess' consciousness hasn't come back yet, but most of her wounds were already cured so I interrupted the treatment and cancelled my Spirit Sword.

I kicked the ground, and then kick the ground one more time using magic as my foothold, I jumped to the air.

The skill I hurriedly acquire is『Sky Walk』. With this skill, I can make a foothold beneath my feet, making aerial battles possible.

This skill has helped me on the battlefield. It was certainly activated. It had activated, but…

「Is this a joke…?」

He gasped as he was dumbfounded at the excessively crude activation of the skill. The consumption of magic power and the activation speed, it can't be compared to my own senses.

「Status Open!!」

Ukei Kaito | 17 years old | Male
HP: 531/545 MP: 297/412
Level: 1
Strength: 224 Stamina: 324 Endurance: 545 Agility: 587 Magic Power: 117 Magic Resistance: 497
Inherent Skills:「Spirit Sword▽」「Language Comprehension」
Skills:『Punch Lv1』『Magic Manipulation Lv1』『Sky Walk Lv1』
Condition: Excellent

When I opened the status window, the skill that I used just now,『Magic Manipulation Lv1』and『Sky Walk Lv1』were registered.

When I tapped the word『Sky Walk』on the status window, I sighed.

「Sigh-, just as I feared… 」

『Sky Walk』Skill Level: 1
Skill Proficiency: 1/10000 A skill to make footholds in the air with magic.

That was written in the status window.
In other words, the skill was treated as newly obtained.

My drained MP proves it.

Like I said before and to put it briefly, the skill level indicates how much you are used to the skill.

When you successfully activate the skill, your proficiency will rise up. And with that, you can use it more efficiently.

To elaborate, when Sky Walk levels up, the MP cost and casting time decreases.

Frankly speaking, a level 1 skill is garbage. Most of them have a consumption rate so bad that you can’t use them in actual combat.

Just in case, I checked the other skills
but they were level 1 too.

「It doesn't seem to be an effect… of a curse. If there were a tremendous effect like this, I wouldn't have lasted that long on the battlefield.」

Actually, before I had awoken here, if my memory serves me right, I had every skill on advanced level, making it possible to use『Sky Walk』and『Magic Manipulation』while chattering, and fight alone for a year or more.

If there was a sword that has a skill effect that can reset one's level and skills, then there is no need to rely on a hero, because you could just defeat the Demon Lord in one hit…

…Nah, although that's impossible, you could defeat her with ease.

「That moment, before being killed… Nah, I'm going to assume that I survived because I'm still alive. And while I was unconscious, they afflicted me with a new kind of status effect?」

In the status window, it's stated that my condition was excellent, but the status window can be full of flaws so I can only use it as a reference. And my status window could've been deceived by an obstructive and high level status effect.

That's why, to recognize what type of effect I have on me, I opened my status window again and used the appraisal ability that the Spirit Sword has to obtain a more detailed information of my condition.

If this is really a new type of effect, then I have to grasp the effect without fail, otherwise I won't be able to perceive the requirements to cancel it.

「Well then, Appraisal!

……

…

Apprai…… sal?」

And when I was about to chant the appraisal ability that the sword has and use it on my status window, I stopped my movement.

「It, can't, be…」

While making a wry face because of an awful premonition, I tapped the『▽』icon next to the Spirit Sword.

Then, there listed were numerous names of the Spirit Sword where I had overcome innumerable hardships until now.

However, most of them were displayed in dim gray, and next to them was a mark of a padlock. By touching the mark, there indicates the necessary amount of experience required to release that type of Spirit Sword.

「This is a joke, right…?」

I tried to bring out a few of the Spirit Swords that are colored in dim gray, but none of them worked.

It appears like it's only the grey ones, because I can use the ones colored in white.

Again, to the point of dropping tears, this time, she had passed what she can tolerate, together with the irritation and anxiety, her emotions were going in circles.

While pretending to be unconscious, she attempted to chant a spell from her mouth, so I kicked her to interrupt it.

「Gyaaaaaa!?」

「You really do like surprise attacks, Alesia. For what purpose do you think did I heal you? Don't die before I give you a beating.」

It seems like that was a low-grade fireball, but because it was in an incomplete state, the fireball exploded inside the mouth of the princess.

Surely, the inside of her mouth had become something very serious, so serious that it feels great.

Although I won't say it, I want you to oppose me with every being that you have except killing yourself.

Seeing Princess Alesia-sama self-destructing, it's very fun. It's very pleasant.

As I thought, taking vengeance for myself is refreshing. While thinking that, I suddenly found a notification on the upper-left of the status window, something that I never saw.

Until now, I never saw that icon once, so I don't know what type of effect has.

「H~m, what to do…」

「Guahkk… Gau…vuaahh…」

For now, I'm pressing my bored feet against her stomach while she glares me intensely. Enjoying the disfigured appearance and voice of Princess Alesia-sama.

Suppressing my shock for losing many forms of the Spirit Sword, I slowly pressed my right-hand finger on the email icon.

Chapter 4
The Hero writes a letter

==========

When you read this, you haven't gone senile, but you have already died once.

No, it's not a joke.

I don't know how you died, but you have certainly died once.

When your HP reached zero after you died, you were surely teleported back.

What you experienced until now was the【Tutorial Mode】.

In the case that a person of another world is transported, they gain an『Unusual Power』in this Earth, in this world.

Due to that, compared to the local people, most of them have enormous power. But many of these people died relatively fast, no matter what ability they had.

They will certainly be killed before long.

Even I do not know which world the God of Earth sends them to, even I can't interfere. Still, although I explained to them that they have to be careful, it appears that only a few could adapt, because far beyond their common sense, their reasoning is from another world.

Thus, I stopped explaining things in advance to people from another world.

What I put to use was the【Tutorial Mode】.

I guess that being thrown into the situation without any explanation was very confusing, but seeing is believing, so the last present (cheat) of your god was the【Tutorial Mode】.

After being teleported, except for a natural death, when your HP reaches zero and you die, you will go back to the starting point.

Every point of experience earned, every skill you had until now, the experienced time will be taken away and converted into experience points.

In short, a New Game+.

It's because when your character levels up, your skills do not. If you don't exert any effort, like I said earlier, you'll die a painful death. So I believe that I had to let you experience the 「tendency to die」. That was the best cheat that the God of Earth could do.

In comparison, the magic in your world is very weak. Originally, they are extremely powerless as individuals. And although there is almost no difference between their bodies here, when you cross to another world, an『unusual power』is activated. And you can defeat a slime with your initial value at the most. If you didn't have an unusual power, even you would have nothing more than the power of a Villager A.

So that's why, if you want to survive, then strive, think and train.

Almost all worlds are more dangerous than Earth.

I'm sorry for being an incompetent god, but please, live a happy life.

From the Goddess

＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝＝

「I see, so it was really a New Game+.」

What came out of the email icon was that letter.

There were certain points where I had doubts, but it does appear to be that a god really exists. Levels and etcetera, seemed to have existed also in Earth, in my former world.

The God of Earth, for the sake of the earthlings that even when they got the cheat skill, they were killed easily. Instead of giving any explanation, they put to use the 「Experience it once and then cancel it」method.

Well, I was saved with that, and the various questions that I had were explained.

Now I know what happened to my level, but is the fact that it dropped so suddenly not one of the reasons why you cannot live long?

…Even so.

「Kuhaha…」

Yes, let's be thankful.

Now, I can finish my revenge that I swore that time.

「KUHAHAHAHAHAHAHAH!!」

My laughter doesn't stop, I'm not in the mood to stop.

I never imagined that there would be another opportunity.

Even so, my yearning for vengeance, and the hatred that I embraced in my heart, is not a lie.

By experiencing it personally, bit by bit, I started to get excited. A shiver of delight is travelling through my body, and doesn't stop.

This is not a dream, nor is there a time limit. I can now finish my vengeance, I can kill them.
After laughing for a while, now I can begin to think clearly.

What I'm going to do, from where should I start.

Even right now I want to crush those people, everyone of them.

At my feet, there is one of them, a target (of my vengeance).

Her mouth is being burned right now by her own fireball, and for the many times that I stepped on her, the dress that she's wearing right now is worn out and dirty.

She finally understood that it's meaningless to oppose me or being obedient. That she can do naught but glare at me with hate.

Yes, this. This is it. I want revenge.

If I let my impulse control me, then I can deprive them of their lives easily.

If my level has decreased, then like me, their level had too, right?

I have on me the knowledge I gained and the experience from the tutorial mode.

Although I lost my skills as abilities, I didn't lose the technique to control them with my body.

There are still many Spirit Swords that I can use that have an effect that surpass about level 50 status, and in my surroundings, there are still the knights who don't seem to have experience combat; if there are only 10 knights or less then I can entertain them with no problem.

If I hide for awhile while raising my level, then I can go around assassinating those damn bastards before I strengthen myself and leave for a trip.

「It's not good. That way it's not good, because otherwise…」

I suffered for one year.

While my heart is screaming and cracking, the broken pieces that had fallen are now reconstituting themselves over my desire for vengeance.

The time that passed, a thing was growing up, clinging to me, it was like a muddy viscosity, a lump of heat, telling me that it wasn't going be satisfied with only killing, yelling that it was unforgivable.

Although it was unpleasant to see her face, only this was not enough.

So, I'm not going to kill her yet.

So, it's not going to finish here.

Let's think slowly, I have time, so I don't have to hurry myself when killing her.

I have to let her experience the pain, the painful memories, I have to drown her in a toxic swamp of remorse and agony.

More, more, more, it's necessary for her to suffer more.

Because then, my first vengeance will be completed.

「Aah, I'm not going to kill you right now. Since I have healed you with great difficulty, right? Even though I have thought of many ways to kill you.」

I let out a sigh unintentionally. It's very regrettable.

I thought about several things, like letting a small and carnivorous insect eat her body while she was conscious, like having her germinate a seed together with the grown up host, turning it into a tree, eliminating all sensations and leaving only the ability to think.

Either way, it seems that these abilities were sealed with Spirit Sword, so it can't be helped.
For now, I need time.

Slowly and carefully, I need to start the preparations for my vengeance.

Of course, I have to enjoy the preparation.

「First off…」

I healed roughly inside her mouth with the【Verdant Green Crystal Sword】to an extent that enabled the princess' ability to speak.

「Hey, there is something that I want to ask you.」

「……Who is going to listen a request from a monster like you? 」

Really, she is a good target for my vengeance, the princess Alesia.

「Pfft, Ahahahaa」

「Wh- What's so funny!?」

「You know, you react exactly like I was hoping. Never lose those feelings, because if not, my vengeance is going to be boring.」

While I am looking down, grinning and laughing, Princess Alesia is again looking at me with more hostility in her eyes.

「This, lunatic!! Why! Just what the heck did I do…」

「What you did, although you don't know, I know. I know the pain of being betrayed. I know the pain of being tricked. I know what it's like to be treated like a fool. I remember all the pain I felt for trusting all of you like an idiot. I remember everything, Princess Alesia Aurelia」

「Uu, guu…」

A glance full of hatred like burning magma and a cold voice like a shining blade.
Maybe the princess didn't understand the meaning of my words, but she did perceive that I really hate her.

「Now, we are going to talk again, but I have a request.」

Pa-, my hand faced the princess.

With no sign of her previous state, she makes a perfect smile.

「If you are not going to listen, it can't be helped, right? It makes me sad that despite the fact that I healed your mouth for that purpose, but if you don't want to, it can't be helped, right?」

As expected? I don't know anything, I never had a thought about opposing you ?

「Wh-What are you…?」

It appears to be that until just now, more than being perplexed, her anxiety has been rising. She has good intuition.

「Fumu, your chest is going to be an obstacle for writing.」

「Kyaa!? St-stop it!!」

When I sent her flying with a kick, she ended up face down, and I tore to pieces the back of her dress, exposing her back.

「But you know what, the first time I saw you, I thought I saw a beautiful girl, but now I don't feel anything at all. It's strange, isn't it?」

Her radiant silver hair that hangs to her shoulder, her gold eyes, her well-featured face and good proportions, all of that makes her look like a doll.

Just like a template, the so-called beauty of the Aurelia, a beautiful girl.

When seeing this world for first time, the girls here were more beautiful than in modern Japan, and spying them accidentally when they were changing made my heart skip a beat.

But apart from that, seeing their appearance very close, it didn't make my heart jump or move.

「Snatching by force the chastity of a woman… As I suspected, the people of another world are savage and vulgar beasts…」

「Huh? What are you saying? With an ugly personality of course I'm going to refuse, don't get confused. Your self-confidence is disgusting.」

When imagining what I said, it really makes me sick to the point of vomiting.

「Wha…!!」

「If you say that you are not going to listen to my request, then I have to write a letter instead of a verbal message.」

「…It, It can't, be!」

「You see, a verbal message would have been easier, right? But if you don't listen to my request, then it can't be helped, so what I have to do is to write a nice letter.」

I gave her a cheerful smile, indicating that she guessed right about what I'm going to do.

「Now, can you please stay still? If not, I'm not going to be able to write a nice letter.」

「No, Igyaaaaaaaaaaaa!!!」

What I had taken out was the【Fire Spider Leg Sword】.

A short sword with a length of 20 centimeters including the blade, the Spirit Sword is dyed with scarlet.

This is my second time, this sword could only cause a small fire the first time, so now for this use, it is suitable.

「Fun, fu~fufu~n♪」

「Ugya, gyaaa, it's hooot!! Sto, stoooop!!」

In the meanwhile, I'm singing a humming while carving the letter with fire on her back.

「Somebody, somebody heeelp mee…」

「Ahaha, nobody is going to help you, like how you had planned every trick, and so that that doesn't happen, I crushed everyone here.」

Although Alesia is stretching her hand to the knights who are groaning, everyone here have the joints of the elbow and knee facing the opposite direction, so they cannot move. Although they didn't lose their consciousness, surely the voice of the princess didn't reached them, thanks to the cries of their own pain when they try to lifting their body.

「Come on, come on, I still hadn't finished writing even half. After all, I have to think carefully about what I'm going to do. Can you please stop moving?」

I laughed with a smile while I said that.

Chapter 5
The Hero re-opens old wounds

When I finished writing the letter, it put me in a pleasant mood, like being given a gold star, as if everyone else in this room was gone.

The Princess was groaning in the agony of her crushed limbs. And yet, I didn't stop inflicting more pain until she couldn't stand it and lost consciousness for a short while.

Similarly, the knights were groaning due to the extreme amount of pain, and before long, the number of those that couldn't withstand the pain increased, about to let go of their consciousness.
The result, they felt like their heads were afloat and their eyes were like that of a dead fish's; whether they have fainted or not, their resonating moans have died down.

「Ara? This feeling, it also has been a long time.」

Having completed my work, I got up and noticed that my vision was disoriented. It was evident that my MP had sharply depleted.

While writing the words with【Fire Spider Leg Sword】, I restored Alesia's HP with【Verdant Green Crystal Sword】so she wouldn't die. Although【Fire Spider Leg Sword】hardly uses any MP, the healing of【Verdant Green Crystal Sword】consumes a moderate amount of MP.

「Status Open.」

Ukei Kaito | 17 years old | Male
HP：531/545 MP：347/412
Level: 1
Strength: 224 Stamina: 324 Endurance: 545 Agility: 587 Magic Power: 117 Magic Resistance: 497
Inherent Skills:「Spirit Sword▽」「Language Comprehension」
Skills:『Punch Lv1』『Magic Manipulation Lv1』『Sky Walk Lv1』
Condition: Excellent

As it was confirmed, the remaining MP decreased by 20%. As expected, the excessive usage of the Spirit Sword was shown in the current status.

If I don't acquire recovery and consumption reduction skills again, I can't fight like I did before. Should I just raise my level ahead of time or something after all?

「Hmm… Err… Well then. Guess it's about time to go?」

Since I'm about done here anyway, I'll for now slip out of the castle for now and go to the nearest town, then I'll make some preparation to leave the town.

「……It's useless, you can't escape this castle.」

「Eh, did she regain her consciousness?」

「More than 500 knights are stationed in this castle. You will be tortured to death.」

With damage and recovery skills forcibly applied simultaneously, her bodily senses were paralyzed temporarily. Princess Alesia's voice has become hoarse with the pain.

Because her eyes had strength that belittles me, I realized that she returned back the hostility.

As expected, was it the nature of the princess to have such determination even when I had tormented her that much? She also was still confused, and half of it is probably just a false bravado, but if she's given some time to really recover, I can have more fun. I am in a very good mood.

Princess Alesia, who was looking at me as I pondered in silence, shouted at me whilst thinking she still had the upper hand.

「The fact is that you savage people from another world are so full of yourselves. Ee~, I will not let you off so easily; I will kill you in a way several times more painful and humiliating than that I had suffered from.」

Her gaze was filled with glittering heat of hatred.

This is what I wanted. That glare can only be achieved after having recognized that she got rekt.

That glare made her realize that it's possible to push down the pain, disgrace and humiliation to the bottom.

However……

「Well~, if you don't cry, cling and beg for forgiveness, then I cannot help you. Since the likes of you, a hero, can also be useful, then if you make an oath in front of our people as a glorious hero, would you honor the oath and swear allegiance?」

Sigh-, such a spoiled child; I was being looked down on as if she was convinced that she was superior with that look and words.

I looked at the princess, and as for me.

「HAAAaaaAAAAAAhhh~……」

From the bottom of my heart, I was truly disappointed; I outrageously heaved an exasperated sigh.

Before, I was naïve and easily deceived, and it saddens and depresses me.

I had no intention of doing it, but even if I cried, clung to her and begged for forgiveness, this princess wouldn't help me. She just wanted to confirm her dominance by seeing my pitiful figure, and either way, after she uses of me, I could easily see that she was brimming with the intention to kill me at the end of torture.

An easy-to-handle heroine, or referred to as *Choroin-san*, and the old me, who seemed to be a super *Choroin-san*, were easily deceived by this princess.

And again, this much pain still didn't sate my thirst for vengeance at all.

Even though she had thoughts of 'using me', I still won't be satisfied with ending it by killing her. In that case, it would be no good.

She still has her uses to consider; however, if I don't kill these people after they looked down on me, and others like this fellow that wanted to trample over me, completely by my own hand, my desire for revenge surely won't be satisfied.

There are several enemies to take revenge on; in order to accomplish a satisfying revenge, it will take a lot of labor and time with one person at a time.

(Well, isn't that nice, I can enjoy this revenge for as long as I can!!)

Imagining that moment, the edge of my mouth perked up unintentionally.

「Wh- What's with that reaction! If you think I'm lying about the knights…」

「Meh, I didn't particularly think it was a lie. The Hero summoning is a secret and must be kept as such, so as ordered, there are layers of soundproofing barriers, magical barriers, and physical barriers set up; so until the hero summoning is a success, there will be no knights from the outside entering this building.」

「Why do you?!」

「It's because I've heard it once before~……」

While the stupid-looking princess stared in shock, I recalled the story I heard at the first summon.

「Uhh, so yeah, I'll be going.」

The candlesticks were put up on the pillars in preparation for the summoning, and I threw them aside.

Then, one of the stone pavements at the end summoning rattled and opened, which from there appeared a staircase leading to an underground passageway.

「N- Nobody knows about that hidden passage except from the direct descendants of the Royal Family, and yet why!!?」

「Because I heard it before, no, since I am so well informed~.」

To deceive me, Princess Alesia also prepared teleportation magic squares beneath the summoning to entrap me; Princess Alesia also told me this secret path.

「Dangerous, I forgot this place was dangerous.」

Perhaps because I was able to satisfy a little of my revenge as prelude, I must have almost forgotten about this place.

As I was walking briskly, a nearby knight groans as he rolls like an object on the floor.

「At first, I was going to crush you with my bare hands, however, someone taught me a valuable method to smash that splendid throat at this angle, wonder if it is possible to do? Although using MP will be unreliable, if it's only the【Fire Spider Leg Sword】… then I could probably manage.~」

So as I said, when I created a Fireball the size of a ping pong ball at the swords' bottom point, I threw it in the knight's mouth and made it burst.

「¢ £%＃&□△◆■!?」

Because there was no need for him to die, the power was narrowed down to the limit, but there was no scream from the Knight, since his mouth and throat was directly burnt by the fire.

「Oopsie Daisy~」

When I dealt the same treatment to the other Knights ensuingly, it became impossible for the Knights to even groan.

「Lastly, you, Alesia. Since it will take a while until we meet again, do you have anything you want to say?

「……., Your name, tell me your name.」

「Nah~ after this though, there shouldn't be any reason to try hiding my name. Since my name is written….in the letter」

Woosh~ , the fireball was thrown in the mouth of the Princess.

「I'm called The Two-Eyed Nemesis~」

「Mu～～～～!!」

At any cost, the Princess Alesia showed no weakness of pain, and endured the raging pain without issuing a voice.

All the fingers were removed and not usable. The throat will not be recover for a while, and should buy enough time.

「Ah~, and then as for this, I will accept it. To make up for the things you've did, these military funds.」

I took away the necklace which hung on the Princess' neck. If I am not mistaken, since this is connected to a distinguished Royal Family, I won't be currently troubled if I exchange this for money.,

Princess Alesia still glares this way with faint eyes. The tormenting of the prey was pleasant.

Finally, when a sweet smile floated on my face, I went down the underground passage alone with a glance back, feeling good about the events transpiring today.

While I tread the underground passageway, I remembered something from a little while ago, and my head began to grow cold.

As a result, I felt the itchy sensation of an old wound being opened.

Unintentionally sighing, I spilled the words.

「I should've thought more carefully on what to call myself….. Ku, AHHHH WHAT IS TWO EYED NEMESIS!! And even more so, it wasn't something I wanted!!」

I personally dug up an old wound with a Chuunibyou name, and until I arrived at the exit, I ended up enduring the sensation that my body wanted to writhe in agony.

Chapter 6
The Hero rekt the punks

Pushing the rubble out of the way, I exited, finally arriving at bright and spacious open air.

「I'M-!! FREEEEEEEEE!!」

Having travelled through the long and dark underground passage, I had finally arrived there, where I can praise the sun. I let out a howling cry whilst stretching out my body and basking in sunlight.

These were the outskirts of the Royal Capital's uninhabited grove.

Taking a deep breath near the stone passage's exit, the smell of sunshine was incorporated into the refreshing odors of the verdant forest.

I saw the sun for the first time in three months, if you include my first time (though not even a day has passed yet since my second time started). After escaping the place I was killed-, Ryuudouden, I kept hiding. Before, I hadn't been able to appreciate the sun, which is why I had been moved to tears when I saw the sun.

「Ah~, the sun… it's great……」

After being deeply moved by the splendor of the world under the blue sky for a bit, a switch flipped inside my head.

My goal was decided. Having suffered from all the guys who tricked and betrayed me, and having had my dignity stamped on to the fullest, I will carry out my revenge.

That said, right now, I lack the power, time and preparation to do so.

As expected of a Lv1, I am limited to a play style without skill correction, and my stamina isn't nearly enough to take on more than 500 knights.

For the time being, because only the Princess and the Knights in the palace know my face, I won't need to be very cautious if I leave the town's castle, unlike the time I was being chased after my face became well known for defeating the Demon Lord.

At the least, there shouldn't be a situation where I won't be able to enter a restaurant or inn, or even the town itself, without wearing a long robe to cover my face.

Turning my gaze back to the sun once again, I saw the sun was setting a little. It was approximately an hour past noon. I thought back to the time I was first summoned.

「With the skill of the Royal Court Magician, it will probably take around a full day for the castle to recover enough to report about me in detail. Well, I should have plenty of time if I don't take a detour.」

I began to walk leisurely toward the Royal Capital's main street and looked at the cityscape after a long absence.

To be frank, these residents of the Imperial Capital were people who had believed the declaration of The Kingdom and The Church and turned hostile.

I had actually thought I might have wanted to smack their faces really hard like I did the Princess and the Knights when I saw them, but that didn't happen. Maybe it was because the majority were unrelated, ordinary members of the populace, and also didn't incite the treachery either.

Of course, I disliked them at a level of natural thinking: "Aah~, it would be good if these people become unhappy. If only they would fall down and hit their head on a stone and become crippled tomorrow or something." But, rather than spending my resources on them, I had people I wanted to kill even more.

In short, it was an issue of prioritization.

I paused my idle thinking. The first thing we must do concerns the procurement of war funds.

In regard to that, I had something of a prospect.

The heavy necklace that I had swiped from the Princess was kept in the pocket of my uniform.
Even if we disregard the fact that this item came from the Royal Family, with the mithril, colorful magic gem, and enhancements that apply some agility correction to the owner, the value is still good..

If this was sold, it would be possible to obtain sufficient funds quickly.
Of course, it must be sold carefully.
My current appearance was not noble in any aspect, and, to begin with, there weren't any places that would buy this item nor any market place this can be sold at.

With that reasoning, I didn't head to the people setting up shop facing the main street.

Instead, it was "The Slums," which occupied the corner of the Kingdom's Capital. It was a place shady people went to make a living.

I remembered that, if I entered the appropriate alleyway and advanced in the deserted, dirty direction, I would appear in a place where I'd wonder whether it's the same town before long.

The cracks on and damage to the walls of this dirty, worn-out house stand out, and the smell of poop, piss, and garbage drifts everywhere, as if to scorn the concept of public health.

The people sitting on the roadside had gloomy and sunken eyes, or otherwise their eyes glittered as they glanced for prey to hunt.

Observing eyes and appraising gazes were split half each, and the ridiculing gazes mixed in occasionally must be newcomers to the slums.
The slums in any town are places where amateurs who judge by appearance can't live long.

「Hey, Nii-chan in the unusual outfit, why are you in this place alone?」

「……」

「Oto~, that's unlucky Nii-chan. I'm afraid to say that both the way forward and back are dead ends now. If you want to pass, it's common sense that you're required to pay a toll, right?」

Smirking and laughing, 5 or 6 people surrounded me.

「I've always thought about it, but this cliche….. No, rather, it's nice because the conversation would be quicker.」

It can't be helped, they think this person is an easy target having seen me alone with this appearance, but in general, for what reason do gangs like these pop out during the first time I come to whatever town's slums?

I know the slums of each town I've become well-acquainted with, as a fugitive, I know that they are varied, and the back areas are convenient. So not utilizing the slums during the second time around is something I can't do, though I feel a little weary at the thought of having to repeat this cliche at every town.

Since I'm alone in this second time around, I thought this was inevitable, but for this kind of development to be heart-throbbing is limited to only the first time, or second time at best.

Anymore would absolutely only be bothersome.

The people in the slums around the area quickly skedaddled in fear of getting involved. A person can only live long in the slums by having both wits and strength.

「I'll ask just in case, are you my enemy?」

「Haa? What did this wild goose just say?」

「Listen here, just answer me. You are not my particular target for revenge, so I don't care if you leave because it's also troublesome to kill you.」

「What, I thought you were an idiot or something for coming to the slums alone, but you're a genuine self-conceited bastard? He doesn't understand the reality of the situation, this bastard is a real sitting duck!!」

When the bald, tanned man that seemed to be the leader roared with laughter, the followers also started a large ruckus following him.

「Hey! Lay down all your valuables and goods, then I won't kill you; I'll just sell you as a slave!!」

「I see, so this is your answer.」

Since these punks came striking all at once, I step in first and with【Fire Spider Leg Sword】, and cut off all their limbs from below the ankles.

「Ga? GiyAAAAAAAaaaaa!?」

Suddenly having lost both ends of their legs, the entire group of punks, without support, collapsed on the unpaved ground.

「W-What is this, it hurts, IT HURRRTTTSSSS!!」

「Guuuaaaa. what did- GUKAAA!!!!」

Because I hated being covered in my victim's blood, I used the【Fire Spider Leg Sword】, which produces a high temperature from the sword itself, to cut so the wound is thoroughly cauterized and blood doesn't spurt out. Another feature of this sword is to quickly transmit the heat to the things it comes in contact with.

The uniform I'm wearing now is what I used as every-day clothing during the first time around. Though immediately after setting out on the journey, I was attacked by night bandits, and it ended up being ragged after repelling them.

My obtaining a sword with a cloth-mending effect after I was abandoned and feeling down were bitter memories.

「Hmm, this time it succeeded. Status Open」

Ignoring the punks' shouts behind, I checked my status.

Ukei Kaito | 17 years old | Male
HP：531/545 MP：75/412
Level: 1
Strength: 224 Stamina: 324 Endurance: 545 Agility: 587 Magic Power: 117 Magic Resistance: 497
Inherent Skills:「Spirit Sword▽」「Language Comprehension」
Skills:『Punch Lv1』『Magic Manipulation Lv1』『Sky Walk Lv1』『Night Vision Lv2』『Haste Lv1』
Condition: Excellent

As expected, I was able to obtain the skill『Haste』. I must've obtained『Night Vision』when passing the underground passageway.

Like the name states, the skill『Night Vision』allows me to see in the dark, and the skill『Haste』allows me to temporarily raise my agility level by imbuing magic into my legs.

To be honest, just when I started this second time, in other words, a few hours ago when I grasped the neck of the Princess, I also used it when I tried to slip past the knight, I failed and felt a little backlash in my foot.

If it succeeded, a HP knockback shouldn't have occurred, so I probably hadn't acquired『Haste』.

Though I didn't recover HP because I didn't rest, my MP that I was recovering through the passage of time had recovered to about 30% or so, but since『Haste』was used, 20% was spent.
It will be hard to train this haste skill with it's large consumption rate.

「However…」

Since my magic wasn't consumed all at once, it didn't feel unpleasant, but according to my senses, it hasn't even been a quarter of a day since the second time started.

Even though I understood this in my head, the inability to use the skills that I had treated as an extension of my own limbs was a sensation I was not accustomed to in any way.

「Ah, Oi~, Don't run. Aren't you the leader?」

「GYAAAAAAAAAAaaa!!!」

Having lost his feet, with【Fire Spider Leg Sword】I hacked the arms off the punk who tried to flee by crawling away.

「Guaaaa, It's hot, It hurts, Guaaaa!!」

「Hmm, this is alright, not drenching me in spurting blood is a high point.」

While I was casually saying this, I observed the man who was still screaming, even now.

Unlike when he was cut, the man whose wounds were cauterized while being stabbed bursts tears, mucus, and saliva due to the pain of having his body burnt.

「If I don't produce a fireball, most of my magic will not be consumed, there is no blade length so it's easy to manage, and above all, there's little blood loss, so he won't die easily. Until now, I only used it to the extent of making coal, but with this it's a convenient spirit sword.」

「Mo, mon, monster…..」

「Ah, AAaaaAA…..」

When I laugh in high spirits, the petrified punks wet their pants with terrible faces.

「Aa, it's a filthy picture. It's different for them, but even when I see those expressions of yours, you know.」

Still, my target for vengeance are those who betrayed me directly last time.
Even if I clobbered these guys, I wasn't happy at all.

「Oh whatever, see ya.」

Saying just that, I infuse magic into【Fire Spider Leg Sword】and unreservedly slash at their necks.

With one swing of the sword, the smell of burnt flesh spreads and dripping sounds echo.

「Well, I guess it's time to go?」

Grumbling to myself in such a manner, left behind in that alley were bodies that were missing their parts below the ankles and above their necks, feet from unknown owners, and faces set into horrified expressions with wounds burned until they were scorching black.

Chapter 7
The Hero is both a Stalker and a Shinigami Part 1

「Hah… Hah… Hah… Hah…」

The man was running like there was no tomorrow, he didn't even care about his surroundings.

As he was passing through narrow passages between walls, trunks and twigs scratched at him. Because of this, his arms and legs were grazed .

Nevertheless, he couldn't afford to care for such trivialities.

The small wounds on his body were deemed trivial. His fear had flattened his reasoning a long time ago.
His instincts told him that if he didn't want to be murdered, he had to keep running.

(Shit… This is bad, THIS IS BAD, SHIEEEET!!)

Running out of breath, though his body was begging for rest, his brain commanded him to ignore it and hurry.

The reason why he was running came rushing back with dreadful memories among his now chaotic thoughts.

☆

The man was doing regular duties, just as always, as if it's just a normal day on the job.

People who cannot afford to be seen in the light of day anymore come everyday to these slums.

Notorious criminals who are in the run, orphans who lost their parents, nobles who lost their standing because of family disputes, merchants who failed in enterprises, adventurers who couldn't pay their debts, normal people who are just poor, these are some of the kinds of people who appear here in the slums.

These slums had became the crucible for people who end up running here because of their dark secrets, and would change the people completely.

However, there is order in the slum.

It is known that without the slum, these guys will flood over to the city, disrupting the public order.

One time, some order of knights tried to destroy a slum and annihilated it, took over it, and succeeded. However, contrary to their belief that commerce would flourish thanks to the disappearance of the slums, the public order worsened instead, and the merchants didn't want to approach the city anymore. From that day onwards, everything went downhill.

That's why there is an unspoken rule among the cities not to interfere with the slums, unless absolutely necessary.
Unless you get lost inside the slums, you can have a better life in a secure environment inside a city that has a slum than one that didn't.

Nevertheless, the slum's activities are overlooked, as decided, to some extent. Although the slums are considered a necessary evil, if the people in the slums interfere excessively with the bright side, the city and the country has no other choice than to intervene.

Also, the slum's side didn't want direct intervention of a city or the kingdom. That's why those who stand at the top manage the lives of the slum.

They adjust the population, and maintain the status quo within the slums.

Also, they try to keep disturbances from happening outside of its borders.

In exchange of accepting problematic subjects, there's an implicit agreement that the events happening inside the slum, under a certain level, will be swept under the rug.

A place that is accepted as extraterritorial, that is what the slum meant.

That's why the man, making use of his abilities he learnt as a former spy, surveyed the entrances located all around the royal capital's slum, as ordered by the man who stands at the top of it.

If he were to caught sight of a dangerous man, he would grasp all his main characteristics and inform the boss.

If he were to find nobles, riches, or any son of an influential figure that could endanger the slums, he would safeguard them.

By doing that, he prevented the slums to infringe upon the imposed rules, and would protect the slum from possible purges. If the slum were to disappear at some point, it would mean that he would lose his place to live.

That's why, when he sensed the man coming from the grand avenue, as always, he marked the man as a target and started his surveillance.

The age of the boy seemed to be just past 15 years old. He had black hair, a slim figure, and was wearing some jet black clothes. Although his clothes' quality were good, there weren't clothes of that type among those of the capital.

At least he didn't look like someone influential, but from his appearance you could tell that he wasn't someone who was broke, or a criminal.
He could be a noble or a merchant from another town, but he couldn't tell his influence or power. However, he knew that boy wasn't an ordinary person.

「That means, it should be all right if he were to get some deep wounds …」

As the man was muttering to himself, on the main avenue, he saw that there were several hoodlums that appeared and surrounded the intruder. Then, the boy would get assaulted, be injured and saved by the man, as usual.

Those hoodlums and the man were under an agreement. In other words, it was a match-pump approach.

By giving them money periodically, in the case when the man were to judge that the intruder should be left alive, the hoodlums would fake a fight with the spy and at some point they would bail out of there, forcing the intruder to owe the spy a favor.

By doing that, the man would ask the intruder to leave the slums, while the victim doesn't have complete animosity over the slums.

"Just when they are about to break 2 or 3 of his bones, it should be the right time to go" was what he thought as he prepared to go into the fight. Waiting for the best opportunity to intervene the hoodlums attacking the boy, he was left speechless by the following scene.

「Huh? GAAAAAAGH!?」

A scream echoed over. The man, for a moment, couldn't understand the scene as it played out before him.

The hoodlums that were trying to assault the boy collapsed and bent down on the ground. Even the emissary, with the eyes he had trained all his life, couldn't completely grasp the whole incident.

Nonchalantly, he created this scene with ease; and the one responsible for this catastrophe looked like he wasn't particularly interested in this. Before who knows how long, in his hand, there was an edged tool that could as well used as a throwing knife; and using that blade, he pinned the hoodlum leader's arm to the ground to prevent him from escaping. And finally, as the boy decapitated him, the man started to run.

There was no need for an explanation.

He sensed that he was unable to deal with the boy.

A strength that could be considered insurpassable by that of the kingdom's order of knights.
A tough spiritual mind that can take lives without a hint of hesitation, to the point of being inhuman, an outsider of the slums.

That silhouette looked like that of a god of death that reaps the souls of those it chooses.

He didn't know if the hoodlums had talked to the boy about their relation, but he was sure that if the boy were to put his eyes on him, there was no way in hell that he would be left alive.
In any case, the man's instinct was telling him that death was upon him.

As the man tried to cross, as fast as possible, to the other side of the moldy bridge. The former spy, judging that it was impossible to handle the boy all by himself, and being suppressed by his fear, was retreating to inform the man responsible for the slums, as soon as possible.

☆

After some time had passed since he had started running, the man had reached the slum's market.

Straying from a street where there were only crude wares that couldn't be compared to normal goods of the capital, he enters a building through a corner.

Installed in the crude building's interior, there was a reinforced steel door, and on both of its sides, there were two gargoyles enshrined, acting as guards.

The gargoyles looked at him with cold eyes, just as cold as their gray skin that felt roughly like stone.

「「*What's the password?*」」

「Haaa, Haaa,『*The master key of the garbage dump.*』」

「「*You can pass.*」」

Speaking in concert, both of them synchronized their answer as they both heard the password. As he took a relieved breath, he pushed open the door made of steel.

Inside it, there was a room, unusual for the slums, that was kept clean; even most the furniture and supplies were valued highly, adorning the splendid interior that could even be comparable to that of a middle rank noble's mansion.

In the middle of the room, there were bodyguards who were former knights or adventurers, relaxing while gambling.

「Nnn? What happened Jack, so agitated.」

「Hey Hey, sympathize with him a little. Maybe he ate something bad and he's at death's door?」

「Hey, youuu… Don't try to cheat within all this commotion!!」

「Tch, you're too sharp-sighted.」

Having been called his name, while being surrounded by his colleagues who provide a reassuring atmosphere, laughing, Jack felt that his fear settled down a little bit. Judging that he was safe here, all the tension melted away.

「I need to meet with the boss, it's urgent.」

Despite feeling safer, it's not a mistake to inform about his findings as fast as possible.

He didn't know the objective of the boy, but he was sure that he was not a regular lost child. He knew that even though one person's influence shouldn't amount to anything, as a veteran spy, he couldn't leave the boy alone, because he didn't know the impact that the intruder could bring to the slums.

「What? Did the country dispatch a knight?」

「I don't think so… We'll talk later.」

Believing that he couldn't explain the situation concisely, as he was a spy, he decided that it would be pointless to try to report inaccurately, he decided to not speak his thoughts too quickly.

Climbing the creaking wood stairs, at the end of the hall, he stood there and knocked on the door.

「『*Who is it?*』」

「Boss, it's me Jack. I want to inform you about something urgently.」

「『*The door is unlocked, so help yourself.*』」

「Then, please excuse me.」

As he pushed and opened the door politely he saw a 30 year old man with all-back style bleached hair and a monocle, who gave the impression of a clever guy, who was reading some documents with his long slit eyes.

「Do you mind if I listen while I check these documents?」

「No problem, Boss.」

The man responded that way, not because he believed that his information was of little importance, but because he believed that this man was capable enough to make a wise decision while doing so.

「Houu, It seems like it will take a while. I don't mind if you make yourself comfortable in that sofa.」

It wasn't known if he understood the importance of the situation just from the man's voice, but the Boss's voice was backed with a serious tone.

「Well, then excuse me… 」

As the man was leaning his back against the sofa, he was thinking about how to break the news. The course of events was running through again inside the man's head, and he was about to open his mouth.

However, before he could make them into words, the boss opened his mouth first.

「Mmm, Jack, you've made a mistake.」

Being transfixed prematurely by his boss by the words『*You've made a mistake*』, even before he told him about the incident, made him freeze in thought.

「Wha, What do you mean by that… 」

「Hello, are you perhaps the boss of this slum? 」

Just when he was about to ask about it, the door was kicked down while the voice was heard; with the sound *batan*, that voice was erased.

As the door opened, a man entered while his killing intent was retracting into his body as he spoke.

There was a man who acted cheerfully, like a friend who was invited to play over at someone's house. In his right hand, there was a gargoyle that didn't have its body, while in the other hand, he was dragging the ex-adventurer, who was the companion of the spy, with all his extremities hyper-extended…

「You, thanks for guiding me. Just for that, I'm going to forget about the matter before」

There was the boy with the smile of a shinigami, standing there.

Chapter 8
The Hero is both a Stalker and a Shinigami Part 2

I was chasing after the man who was running ahead of me.

I was well aware that the man had made an agreement with the hoodlums who assaulted me. Of course, I also knew about the contents of said agreement. If you want to know why, it's because they did the exact same thing in my first life. I forcibly made him spit out everything he's trying to conceal at that time, such as the management (trades inside) of the city. Through this, I also found the one behind everything.

That's why I was well aware that this man was secretly watching the current situation from somewhere. I've already deduced that he's going to report the situation to the man behind the scenes, Shitty Glasses. So I took the opportunity to use him, and followed him to the place where Shitty Glasses was residing.

Though I remembered the place where I first met the slum boss, but because it's a position often targeted, he uses a magic tool to change the building's location to various points inside the slums. That's why, even if I were to go to the location of our first encounter, it wouldn't necessarily lead me to his hideout.

While chasing him without letting him sense me, I confirmed my status, and I realized that I'd obtained two new skills: 『Stalking Lv2』 and 『Hide Presence Lv1』. As I'd thought, it's far easier for me to learn the skills I knew in my previous life. Although all my skill levels were reset, I already knew how to activate all the skills. Because of this, I think that I might be able to raise all my skill levels waaay faster than expected.

While I was chasing him and pondering about such things, I realized that he seemed to be rather anxious, as he was guiding me to the secret hideout using the shortest possible route.

In my first life, I was surprised about this spy's level of wariness. After all, he was once an intelligence agent of some country long ago. I also had to acknowledge resourcefulness as an information broker. However, he was a coward; particularly, he was a man who prioritized his own survival, running away in the face of danger. He was even scared after sensing my blood lust when I killed those hoodlums, even though it wasn't directed at him.

Killing each other is an everyday occurrence in these slums. Someone would even decapitate a kid just to obtain a piece of bread, even fighting to death over a rotten fruit. The psychopathic killers who frequently appeared in the slums were often killed by the ones who controlled the slums.

It's an extremely rare case that a day in the slums ends without a single death. Even now, as I pursue the spy, there are people here in the slums fighting over some food.

Just like in my first life, the spy seemed unaffected by by the deaths of others. Perhaps he sensed danger encroaching upon him this time when he saw me slaughter those hoodlums. Maybe that's why he thought he would lose his life if he were to be found.

After the man entered the compound, I waited a bit before entering myself.

There was a familiar looking gate made of steel, safeguarded by two enshrined gargoyle statues.

「「The password is?」」

「A~h, I had almost forgotten about these guys……」

I scratched my head, thinking for a moment that I had screwed it up. Last time the password wasn't a problem since I'd forced the spy to guide me. I didn't want to make a messy entrance this time, so I decided to follow him secretly, which meant I'd missed out on the password.

The one I'm going to meet now isn't one of my revenge targets. In fact, he was neither my enemy, nor my ally. I repeat, he's definitely not my ally. He's the type of person who will nonchalantly do anything as long as there's some profit. One who partners with someone only for the profits, and will partner with anyone as long as money is involved.

I only know that he will never tell lies. Aside from that, I have no idea of what methods he's going to use. Since the very beginning, he was someone who declared openly that as long as there is gain, loyalties are not set in stone.

A relation only to use and be used.

Even so, he was the most decent one among the ones that I had a relationship with. In addition, he's the one I want to sell the stolen necklace to. There's no benefit for me if I were to appear as a hostile party at the start of sales negotiations with him. If I screw up my first impressions, then he'll take advantage of it during the negotiations.

I needed to act extremely careful when contacting him. If I don't, he would draw information out even without me noticing. This information would end up being bought by other people, mainly information brokers like the spy. I could always just pay a fee to keep it confidential, and he won't talk about it ever again.

With a healthy body, battle wisdom, decency in alchemy, and his analysis comprehension,which is off the charts, Shitty Glasses is by no means an individual that I can neglect.

「Though it may be sudden, could you let me meet with your boss?」

「「The password, please?」」

It seems the gargoyles didn't have any intention to hold a conversation. Though I didn't think that Shitty Glasses would keep using the same password, I only knew of one. So without any other option, I try using a password from 3-5 years in the future.

「……『*Inverse fur of the Nezulla Rabbit*』」

「「Wrong, leave at once. You're an uninvited guest.」」

「*Sigh*-, if I knew at the beginning that it would end this way then I wouldn't have even tried.」

The seemingly immovable gargoyles leapt from their pedestals using their stone wings. They moved towards me, as if I had been marked as a target for elimination. The gargoyles opened their mouths and started to invoke magic, but at the same time, I went to confront them head on.

Unlike the dragon-kin breath, which excels in dealing massive damage over a wide area, the breath of gargoyle just goes straight forward like a laser beam, and has a very limited range too. Even with my skills being sealed, gargoyles, which are man-made, are no match for me as they can only do simple movements.

Slipping through the lasers, I hit one of the gargoyles. Its skin was hard, as expected of a gargoyle, seemingly impossible to break with my current status. Manipulating my mana, I left my legs and eyes strengthened as they already were, and concentrated the rest of my mana to my arm, strengthening it too, albeit temporarily. Although the parts of the body where magic is collected are greatly enhanced, the other parts weaken dramatically. This made it look like a desperate move, but with these pitiful stats, my second chance at life would be gone if I get hit.

Although I could have avoided using this strategy, it would require the use of a spirit sword, a trump card I wasn't keen on revealing. Even if it couldn't be helped that I'd used the【Fire Spider Leg Sword】on the hoodlum, I had to consider that he, Shitty Glasses, could be monitoring me through the gargoyles. I wasn't feeling all that eager to give him information right now.

Moreover, these gargoyles are fire-elementals, in other words, they are able to withstand high temperatures. A fearful opponent indeed for fire magicians, who excel at offensive magic. This rendered the blade's small length and heat ability ineffective against the gargoyles. Making the【Fire Spider Leg Sword】the worst choice by affinity.

In exchange, strengthening by mana manipulation manipulates the mana internally, saving MP. While it has downsides, this level of attack from the gargoyle won't possibly hit me.

「Guruuuu!?」

「Gugaa!?」

First I struck out at their wings, breaking them, and in doing so preventing them from taking to the skies. While they were still dazed by my actions, I stepped on their arms, sealing their movements. The gargoyles were helpless as I took their legs into my hands and swung them in the ground, causing their heads to split open like watermelons. But the fight wasn't over yet. Gargoyles could continue fighting no matter the state of their body, as long as they had a source of power that is. I gouged their eyeballs, the source of their power, from their shattered heads, silencing the gargoyles.

「Who!? Who the hell are you!?」

There was a lone man of medium build who seemed to have come to investigate the sounds of battle. He unsheathed his sword in haste and came this way. Since it would no longer go peacefully, I put my finger in the gargoyle's caved in eye socket and threw its body against the man, causing the gargoyle's neck to be ripped off.

「Guuhaaah!?」

Hit by an unexpected way of attack, the man was unable to evade the gargoyle's body and was flung to the wall.

It seemed like his broken bones may have punctured his internal organs. Backed by a wall, he began to slide slowly to the floor, while he coughed blood.

「You bastard… how dare you beat Hamnz!! 」

Leaving the man as it is, I entered through the door and spotted another slim man of delicate features, he drew his sword and started attacking me. This time, using the【Fire Spider Leg Sword】, I warded his sword off, and while we were at it, using the gargoyle head that I was holding, I struck his knees with it and made him flinch, and I grabbed his arms while I kicked the man's back to dislocate his arms. In the end, I dislocated all his limbs and hyperextended them.

「Guhh.. GUAAAAAAA!!??」

「You!! You little shit, how dare you!?」

It would become troublesome if more people were to assault me, so I pour a thick and overpowering blood thirst to some of my magic and released it in an aura.

Though the personnel were different, they were bodyguards employed by Shitty Glasses, anyway. At most, they were middle class adventurers, or fallen knights; in other words, muscle brains without magic resistance, so the mana laced with blood lust did the trick.

I looked around, but I couldn't find the man who was monitoring me. It is highly probable that he is reporting about me, inside Shitty Glasses' office, located at the end of the hall on the second floor.

Suddenly looking down, I found the slender man with the hyperextended limbs. Well, I might as well use him instead of the blood lust. It will be impossible to keep up the friendly act, since I broke his gargoyles and injured his men.

I grabbed the slender man by the nape of his neck and climbed the stairs without even caring about the man who has been groaning in pain as he was constantly hit by the stairs.

When I went straight to the room at the end of the hall, there were “Physical and Magical Barrier” and “Sound-Proof barrier” blocking the way. Because both hands were occupied, I had no choice but to kick the door with the maximum amount of my magic, using mana manipulation technique for an instant.

「Hello, are you perhaps the boss of these slums? 」

As it was supposed to be my first encounter with Shitty Glasses, I uttered those words to him.

Inside the room, there was Shitty Glasses that looked at me with a calm face which made it impossible to read his mind, and the stalking target, my guide, that looked at me with a pale face.

「Ah, thanks for guiding me. Just for that, I’m going to forget about the previous matters.」

After I say so, I turn my gaze to Shitty Glasses, and put on my business smile.

It’s the start of our negotiation.

Chapter 9
The Hero sells the loot and melts copper

「You know, that door was supposed to be infused with my special barrier. Resistant to both magical and physical attacks, not to mention soundproof. You're making me lose confidence in my abilities.」

「My bad, my hands were occupied with your poorly trained dogs. So I had no other choice but to kick it open.」

「My apologies for that. I manage the slums around here, My name is Duphein Gull. Now, could you state your business?」

Shitty Glasses, who referred to himself as Duphein Gull, said that with a smile. It was as though he wasn't unnerved at all by the chaos that had just unfolded right outside.

Although I had expected that he wouldn't be disturbed at all, his uncaring attitude was still frustrating. It seemed that threatening him would be useless, so I released my grip on both the gargoyle head and the man I was still dragging.

「What, I only want to make a trade. Ah, before we start, I'll be paying the 50 gold fee for privacy.」

I casually took off the necklace around my neck as I said that, watching as there was a change in Dupein's eyes.

「…… Jack, forget everything you saw and leave this room right now.」

「Yes- EH?」

The face of the man called Jack turned pale as he responded. He was clearly confused by the current situation, and was unable to grasp the meaning behind those words.

「You should already understand the dangers of knowing too much. Please, leave while you still know nothing.」

「Ah!! Y-YES!!」

Jack hurriedly left the room, his quick actions making it seem as though he was kicked out. I turned my attention away from the spectacle, immediately going over and standing in front of Duphein's desk.

「Well then, shall we start the negotiations? How much are you willing to pay for this necklace?」

「May I examine it first?」

「Sure, look it over as much as you like.」

After saying that, I placed the necklace on Duphein's desk.

Duphein picked it up carefully, in a delicate manner. He looked at it from various angles, examining every little detail.

He looked over the magic stones embedded in the necklace one by one, carefully inspecting the settings that held them.

「Quite an amazing trinket you have here, all the magic stones have gone through first-class processing. The necklace uses Magic Silver(Mithril) for the chain connecting the settings, doesn't it? Above all, the magic spells infused into the gems are superb. Automatic HP recovery, small increase in recovery efficiency, visual image recording, auto-repairing (small), I can pay you as much as 30 gold coins for such a splendid item.」

「……30 gold coins, right?」

I should explain the currency of this world here. The coinage of this kingdom is divided into 7 kinds as follows: copper, large copper, silver, large silver, gold, large gold, and lastly, white silver (true silver). 10 coins of one grade are equivalent to 1 coin of the grade above it.[1]

Although I can't say for sure, as there are differences in value, 1 silver coin should be valued at around 1,000 yen if converted to Japanese currency. Large gold and white silver coins are not something that can be seen in everyday life, except for the large-scale transactions that would normally occur between kingdoms or large businesses.

It's common knowledge that private transactions are done with gold coins at most, anything more would be outside the range of everyday life expenses.

Back to the main topic, the price attached to the necklace was 30 gold, which should be around 3,000,000 yen.

Even though it's imbued with several types of magic, the necklace was nothing but a mere trinket, and 30 gold would have been a decent price. However, that price was only for the quality of the necklace.

「Hey, don't you go probing around in my head.」

「Tch!!!」

[1] [TL: 10 copper coin = 1 large copper coin]

I glared at him as I released a huge amount of killing intent, but unlike last time, I directed it at him.

「You know exactly how to use it, right? So leave the troublesome things alone, if you can't, maybe I will be able to enjoy killing you?」

That's right, there isn't anyone in this room who doesn't know about it. About the fact that the necklace isn't quite an ordinary necklace. Engraved at the bottom of the magic stone of the necklace was a carved seal which indicated that it was an item related to the royal family: that carved seal made it so it can't be used by anyone except royalty, due to an ancient pact with the great spirit. The reason is because the carved seal was made by the king offering his own blood to have the spirit carve it into the pendant.

This necklace was the reason he had driven his subordinate out of the room; to prevent unskillful handling of the situation. It was also the reason why he stated such a low price, to gain information by observing my reaction, which he would then use to try and gain the upper hand in the transaction.

But, this guy doesn't know what this negotiation means to me.

This is all part of my plan for revenge.
Getting funds is nothing but a trivial matter. To be honest, I could still raise funds for the present even if I were to break it into pieces and sell it. But I brought this necklace here because I believed that he would be able to pull it off naturally. If it was him, he could skillfully send this necklace back to the subordinates of the royal family while earning a hefty profit from it, in other words, he will be a carrier pigeon.

I hinted for him to prepare himself if he became a hindrance by releasing a heavy coercive pressure and bloodlust for an instant, before immediately cancelling it.

Duphein was astonished for an instant but he returned to his usual self immediately afterwards.

「My apologies for the impoliteness. What I needed to know was whether this was genuine. And I only have the power to handle it. It looks like digging for more from you will cost me too much.」

Kukuku, Chuckling lightly, he took off his monocle and wiped it neatly with a cloth.

「Let's set the price to 350 gold coins. I will give 10 golds coin as a deposit for now. As can be expected, I can't prepare such a huge sum of money immediately so please come again tomorrow for the rest. For now, I will return this to you.」

「Is that alright? I might run away with the money, you know?」

「If you really are that kind of person, it will just mean that I my eyes weren't discerning enough. Here, take it.」

After saying that, Duphein passed me a sack of gold he pulled out from his desk.

「If that's the case, I will take it with pleasure.」

When I picked up the necklace from the desk, I open the sack and lightly tossed one of the coins from inside the sack to Duphein.

「This, what's the meaning of this?」

「Nothing, that's just the reimbursement since I broke various things. Also, we~ll 」

I raise the edge of my lips as if I was sneering.

「With this you lost your sight of me, isn't that right?」

「……You said the price for the information on your name was 50 gold coins, right?」

「Sorry, it's not for sale anymore. You just missed your chance and there won't be a second chance.」

After saying that I stuffed the bag with 9 gold coins inside my pocket and left the place.

「……Ku… KUKUKUKU, since something like this happens once in awhile, I never get tired of these slums.」

Duphein, who was left alone, let out a joyful smile as if he was enjoying it.

In his hand was a slime-like lifeform that was wriggling and mimicking a gold coin, made with Duphein's alchemy.

☆

Things were advancing according to my plan, so I walked toward the main street in a pleasant mood. Although I thought that there would be guys going after me, such things didn't happen. I advanced from the deepest part of the slums to the main street.

The sun was also located westward, it would only take a bit more for it to set and complete the day. I want to get to the main street as fast as possible and start searching for an inn. When I consider that this will be the first time in 3 months where I will finally be able to sleep in a regular bedroom where the air isn't humid, and not in barren lands that steal your body heat; I think it is inevitable that my spirits skyrocketed.

「Oops, this reminds me, if I keep it this way, I won't be able to use it well.」

To stay in a normal inn, you only need one silver coin and will even be able to get change. Unlike Japan and the likes, it doesn't come with breakfast and the room is small. To begin with, it is a cheap inn, so even if I were to pay with a gold coin, they won't have any change. And in high class inns where such problems doesn't exist, it is required to show my personal identification, so that was impossible from the start.

If it's possible, I want to exchange some gold coins and get several large copper and silver coins, so I started looking around for money-exchanging businesses.

Although the commission of money-exchanging businesses in the main street is cheaper on so many levels, one would have to show their personal identification to exchange gold coins or above. That's why, I wish to change the money here in the slums, where I can exchange a large amount of money and be forgotten without an inquiry, even if the fee is somewhat expensive.

「I should go to that place.」

I went to a money-exchanging business that I chose randomly.

「Yo, lad. Want to exchange your money?」

The man, who definitely matches the name "muscle daruma", called out in a low tone. To think that the exchangers have an extremely muscular build, or maybe he was publicising that he is considered as the rear shield of some random organization.

「A~h, I want to exchange some gold coins.」

「Gold coins? How much?」

「Just one is enough. Please change it to large copper coins and silver coins.」

The man took out a scale and put the one gold coin I gave him on the right side of the scale, and then placed a counter weight on the other side.

「Indeed, it is a genuine one. Subtracting the commission, it'll be 5 large silver, 23 silver, and 20 large copper coins.」[1]

His share was 25 silver coins altogether.

「That's expensive.」

「If you don't like it, you can exchange it on a legal one, I don't mind it either way.」

Although the exchange commission in this place was certainly many times higher than the average of the slums, it wasn't too outrageous either. Since I wanted to quickly start

[1] [TL : 25% commission]

looking for an inn, I just shut up. The man took out large copper, silver, and large silver coins in front of me as he was counting them one by one.

And then, I was able to sense hostility from that man, no, it was also mixed with malice.

There was something. Today, my intuition worked way better than normal, but I still stayed vigilant and watched.

「Done, I shouldn't have made a mistake when counting them. Here, take it.」

However, I couldn't detect any suspicious actions from that man. As expected, intuition was still nothing but a feeling, however, even though it was illogical, I could still feel some ill-intent from the man, and understood the reason after receiving the money.

「Ha~h, so this was it. HEY.」

「What? What's the ma- …kk!?」

I grabbed the neck of the man, who was completely caught off guard, and bashed his body into the wall behind.

「B-bbastard……, what?, I gave you *silver coins*, isn't that right?…」

「Silver coins? You mean this *copper coin*?」

「Wha-……!?」

As I poured a small amount of mana to the silver coins that he gave me, there was a *clink*-, a snapping-like sound was heard and broke the illusion, transforming it back to a blackened copper coin.

All my skills related to magic perception were lost, and the swords which had perception enhancing passive skills, were sealed. So I couldn't tell that an illusion was cast on the coin in the first place, without touching the coin. Even though I was in a festive mood, I made such a blunder.

「Tch, you are in the wrong for being deceived. This is the slums, you know!? 『Force Up』!!」

To think that he didn't even try to stop and smooth things over… He threw away the chance to mend it over with such a vulgar expression and used physical ability enhancement magic on himself. I thought that he was just a muscle-headed daruma, but he was unexpectedly from the smart faction.

「Geez, Ha~h, this kingdom is really the worst. Every single one of you.」

I feel completely disgusted. Interrupting my good mood, that guy smirking as he glances at me, and above all…

……Being seen as a guy who can be deceived easily was the most intolerable.

As if I was the same as the previous me who made the wrong choices, as if there was no change from last time.

Thinking that he's the same kind as the targets of my revenge, who thought of fooling me, made my blood boil in rage and I really wanted to rip his limbs apart right now.

「Ha~h, I really want to puke.」

I instinctively filled the hand that was being held by his arm with power.

「GAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!! You bastard, why can't I tear it ooooooff!! 」

Although he seized my arm, which was holding his neck, and tried to tear it off, it's impossible for this man to get away from me even if he reinforces himself with Force Up and is unbeatable even by the kingdom's knights, since I had already strengthened my arm with mana some time ago.

「Gah~, Kuhhk, H-how…?」

By the way, this method for concentrating magical power isn't well-known in the general populace. Since there's no sign of me invoking magic, he couldn't understand why he couldn't break free from the hand of man who was way more slender than him.

「Ah, that's right, since something good happened to me today, I can let you off the hook.」

「Guh, Geho, GEHO!!」

I came up with something great so I said that, smiling and letting him go.
Maybe he reached a point where he understood that he messed with someone he must avoid, but his face paled as he asked me.

「I just have to apologize, right? I was wrong, it was my fault, I will apologize, apologize to you so please forgive me……

「Well you don't have to apologize, you just need to take responsibility earnestly.」

While saying that, I put away all the copper coins that I held in my hand for a moment. And without a sound, I took out the【Fire Spider Leg Sword】. This Spirit Sword is really playing an active role today.

「W-wait!! Please wait!!」

Normally, the punishment for counterfeiting money is chopping both arms off the culprit along with huge amount of debt. Although the punishment for counterfeiting money as a matter is, of course, issued with the backing of this kingdom, the culprit will be unable to return their debt due to his lost arms and might try to sell himself as a slave, or commit suicide.

The muscle daruma shouted and panicked because he remembered about such a thing and thought that I would cut off his arms with my dagger.

「What's the matter, do you think that I will chop your arms off? Don't worry, I won't do that. In the first place, there's no way I can do that with a sword of this size, right?」

Though it's certain that I have more than enough power to sever them, I said that line while sneering at him.

「See, this little guy has a somewhat interesting ability. Usually, it can only be used as a campfire or grill, however, maybe due to the influence of its former life as a monster, it displays a tremendous amount of power when used against a certain material.」

「Hah? Eh?」

The Prominence Spider was the acquisition condition for the【Fire Spider Leg Sword】. It is a blazing big spider which lives in the lava cave.

They were never required to hunt to get their meal despite being a demon themselves. The staple food of Prominence Spiders are various minerals that exist inside the lava cave, it lowers the melting point of the minerals with its unique flame, which is called *Poison Flame*, then eats the dissolving syrupy minerals. In short……

「As I thought, to atone is to accept punishment of a far worse proportion than what you did. That's why, I'll have you eat them all with that lying mouth of yours, what do you think?」

Right after saying that, I broke both his legs and arms so that he couldn't escape.

「G-GYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!」

His hoarse scream resounded through the streets of the slums. However, his nightmare had yet to end.

「Well then, let's start with the first coin.」

I forcibly opened his mouth with something made with a material similar to iron that I casually found close to me.
And as I poured a considerably large amount of magical power into the【Fire Spider Leg Sword】that I held in my hand, I placed a copper coin on top of it. The copper immediately melted and slowly slid down the blade of the dagger.

「GyAAAAAAGAHGAAAAAAHGAAAAAAaa!!!!!!」

The blazing hot liquid dripped down as it emitted a dull light, and it roasted the man's innards.
He won't die easily though.
The【Fire Spider Leg Sword】can easily dissolve metals, since it can lower the melting point of the metals.

Though it's hot, it's just about $300℃$ at the most. If it's just at this degree, the possibilities of him surviving are high.

「Look! Here comes the second coin. There still are 46 left. You can still endure it because of your activated Force Up, right? Oy, the third one is coming.」

With each lump of scorching liquid dripping down, I let out a sneering smile while enjoying the soundless screams of the muscle daruma.

Chapter 10
The Hero is punishing and considering, and crafting an evil plan

The surroundings already began to darken as I finished forcing the currency exchanger muscle daruma to swallow all the molten copper coins. Maybe in an hour, the sun will fall completely.

The man, after being forced to swallow, seemed to have used up the last of his remaining strength to withstand it, fell as he was no longer conscious. Right now, he is violently spasming at my feet.

Well, he did continuously use his Force Up until the very end, so it's quite probable that he will survive even if I leave him be. Well, that's only in the case that anybody cared enough to heal him though.

「Mmm, it wouldn't be fair if I were to give him the killing blow…」

I acted as I was stimulated and angered by the memories of those who betrayed me, however, I did clearly declare that "if you swallow all the copper coins, I will forgive you", so I have to abide it, for my own good. If I were to break my vow and use my force, just to calm my feelings, then, I would probably become just like them.

I don't think that there is any possibility that he will ever try to sabotage my revenge. He did pay for his crimes, so any more than this would cease to be "Retribution".

I did become an avenger, but I did not become a demon murderer.

If I were, at some point, to find pleasure in killing; then I would die before I get my revenge as I would transform into someone else. I cannot let that happen. I made a vow to myself to get my "Revenge", so I cannot allow myself to make a single mistake on where I draw the line.

He is the one of whom the target of my wrath is, so I cannot allow myself to screw it up for the second time, not in a one in a million chance.

「Nevertheless, to think that the human body is this resilient…」

To tell the truth, I didn't expect him to survive until the end; this muscle daruma bastard is sturdier than I thought. I predicted that he would die after the 20th coin.

I wanted to use him as an example, so I deliberately made it so that it would be horrifying for the others. However, if I were to leave him alive, I would be categorized in the slum as someone seemingly naive.

Nevertheless, I'm not remotely planning to cure him. So even if the guys who are hiding nearby flock around us, I won't give a damn. In the end, it was just due to the fact that "I let him off because I wanted to". I don't mind one way or another if he survives or dies because of this. After all, he is still a citizen of this country who doesn't deserve my help.

I took the money that should be mine that was replaced with counterfeits made with illusion magic, which was exactly 5 large silver, 23 silver, and 20 large copper coins, and put them inside the bag full of gold coins.

As I finished packing the coins until it was full, I started to walk away. I never heard of what happened to that man.

☆

「Well then.」

At the edge of the town, the side road 1 to 2 streets away from the main street.

I entered an inn that I chose randomly, and I put the cases I was carrying under my armpits to the ground. The 20 cases that I had bought on my way here are making a sound as if there was glass inside of them.

Inside of the bottles, there was blue liquid which is valued at 4 large silver coins, known as the MP Potion.

「First off, I have to check my status, there is something I'm concerned about.」

Thinking that, I opened the status window.

In this world, there are 3 ways to increase your status abilities.

The first one is the basic body strengthening and training which would fortify and correct the base.

For body strengthening the strength, endurance, and agility status are improved; magic wise, if you were to spend your mana to the limit, then, it could increase your mana capacity. However, the strengthening pace isn't that high even though it shouldn't be ignored.

It doesn't mean that the status will increase exponentially as long as you keep training, instead, it means that there is a limit for races, excluding the species such as dragons which are strong without high levels.

The next one is enhancement through skills. They are mainly divided into two types, ones which are usually active all the time, the【Passive Skills】, while the other ones are only occasionally active, the【Active Skills】. It is not like there aren't any exceptions to these two, but it could be basically separated into these two types.

Among them, there are【Passive Skills】that can buff the status. There are skills which are commonly known and aren't complicated like『Body Strengthening』or『Endurance Enhancement』. Other skills like『HP Regeneration Improvement』buff the HP. And the skill『Mana Efficiency』enhances statuses such as magic resistance among others.

And to stray off the topic for a bit, contrary to【Active skills】like『Sky Walk』or『Haste』which rely on the consumption of HP and MP to operate, simply invoking actions or repetition won't let you earn【Passive skills】or level them.

These【Passive skills】require several established conditions to level up, for example, the『Tracking Lv2』skill was earned by following the【Without the target realizing, follow him for 10 minutes or more】condition. Furthermore, it adds a correction for agility.

Regarding the classification of my soul sword, it can be considered to have both passive and active skills. Using the soul sword as a weapon, the part which uses its special ability could be considered as an【Active Skill】, on the other hand, there are passive skills that come along with the awakening of a soul sword.
For example, the【Verdant Green Crystal Sword】enhances physical strength, endurance, and magical resistance, while the【Fire Spider Leg Sword】buffs statuses such as agility and endurance.

However, according to the calculations, the soul sword could only increase『+50』on status while skills buff only a percentage of the status, which becomes something like a bonus as you train your basic abilities.

So, returning to the topic, the third option to increase status is simply to level up. Although physical training increases the fundamentals like leveling, it doesn't come close to leveling.

Leveling up can be only done by accumulating experience, and you can get it from "killing things or living beings who have consciousness or instinct". Of course, that includes humans, and the reward increases proportionately to the difference in status.

Truthfully speaking, there is another way to increase your status, but that hasn't been disclosed to the public, and individuals who are aware of it won't reveal it because of certain reasons, which is why I won't disclose it now.

And because of the experience from the 6 hoodlums and the 2 gargoyles (the bodyguards from Duphein's mansion should have been saved with recovery potions), so I should have earned some, but:

「……I'm still level 1. Why is that?」

When I killed those hoodlums, I thought that it was because of their low level and they were even lower than me who has all the corrections, however, I'm sure that those gargoyles from Duphein's mansion had even higher stats than me. I have proof since I gave them a punch to the stomach that didn't even flinch them. I thought that it was strange so I had no other choice than to touch the part of the screen where『Level』was written.

Then as I looked at the displayed screen, I cast my eyes down in shame.

Actual Level: 1
Experience points accumulated: -20000/150 Remaining earned experience points: 1012

「Dear Goddess of the Earth, it is true that you said the regression from time transition would have to be dealt with, but aren't you overdoing it with the negative points?」

I complained instinctively. I sighed lightly and moved on.

Although there was a display of the actual level and accumulated experience points from time ago, I have never seen the『Remaining earned points』option on the bottom before. I knew instinctively what that was for, but I had to make sure by tapping the display.

Please decide on the experience points to be distributed.
Points left　1012 【OOOOOO】　　YES／CANCEL

「As I thought.」

Selecting the number input field, a dial display appears with a scroll which controls it. It seems that with this, I can decide on the distribution of the experience points. Perhaps, it was changed since the soul swords now need to be unlocked by accumulating experience points.

For the time being, I now know that I won't be able to level up for some time. Because there are a lot of negative experience points, for some time, I will be forced to hunt so I can level up. Even though the level increases, if there is no difference between status, there won't be a juicy amount of points; even if the difference between levels exists, there is the correction done by all the soul swords, so without prey as extravagant as the gargoyles, I won't be able to save experience points.

After closing this tab, I went to open the soul sword's tab.

In an instant, I checked the list which indicates all the soul swords that are available right now.

「So, the ones I can use are the【Soul Sword of the Beginning】,【Fire Spider Leg Sword】,【Verdant Green Crystal Sword】,【Magical Mending Hook Sword】, and finally,【Holy Sword of Vengeance】, huh.」

To be able to unlock each of the other types of Soul Swords, I need around 3000 or more experience points. Furthermore, the swords require more experience points to unlock as their priority gets higher. However, I'll think about it later.

For a period of time, I'm going to review the properties of the swords which could be the main weapon again, one by one.

「The Holy Sword of Vengeance, so it was like that huh……」

After I revived in my second try, to think that the reason that I became more sensitive regarding evil intentions and hostility was because of its passive skill. So it seems, that something like my sixth sense will alert me if someone is directing such intentions at me. Apart from that, I looked for some of the other details of its abilities.

The conditions for acquisition were indicated at the bottom: those were【1. To swear with absolute certainty, vengeance on more than 10 guys whom you trusted; 2. To be given more than a fixed amount of physical damage in total by those who are targets for revenge.】

That's why I was able to obtain this sword at death's door.

「Speaking of which, what happened to that…」

After reviewing the abilities once more, I scrolled down the list of Soul Swords again.

In it, there was a【？？？？？？？？？？？？】section that displayed a mystery Soul Sword.

It was added suddenly after I impaled her, the Demon Queen.

It didn't change the display even after my second life, and it doesn't show anything after I select it.

Differing from the other Soul Swords, it is not disabled by a lack of experience points, and neither it is marked with a key mark, but, it is still colored in gray.

「Anyhow, I cannot be this optimistic……」

With my actual status, I will probably be gradually worn down if more than 70 of the king's knights surround me.
I should be increasing my abilities as fast as possible, by acquiring skills to enhance myself. I'm in no position to drop my guard.

「As I thought, I should buy it tomorrow. It should also be of help when I exit the town.」

I put all the things in order inside my mind that I require before I leave this town.

Then, after finishing with all the miscellaneous matters, I moved onto the main event.

I put the necklace on the middle of the table and prepare the Lower Grade MP potions within my left hand's reach so I can drink it at any moment. And I grasp a substitute knife blade, the【Magical Mending Hook Sword】which has a key-like shape at the tip of the hook blade.

「Aaagh, I wanted to see it with my own eyes, it's deplorable but there is no option, huh. Wait, no, if I were to ask Shitty Glasses, couldn't he send me the recording without being discovered?」

It is a merely trivial plan for harassment, however, I certainly want to see with my own eyes, the faces that the king, queen, and the princess make. If I were to twitch it in the direction of excessive acting, it could be of great assistance.

Besides, the time which I spend with the king and the queen is rather short, so I have no certainty of which punishment I should give to them at this point. Although it is dangerous, I should get the information.

I'm reluctant to ask more favors of Shitty Glasses, but under these circumstances, I don't have any other choice. For my revenge, I would even lower my head to him.

「However…… kukukuu…」

I laughed while I thought of the moment when I succeed on my scheme.

It's not like I'm not tired after all the things that happened today. But my top priority right now is this over taking a rest. Putting it with other words, I won't be able to sleep without finishing this.

As I poured my mana into the【Magical Mending Hook Sword】, I was making progress on my work while humming happily.

Chapter 11
The Hero Sing, Overslept, and Negotiate

「Lala～lan♪ lalan♪ la～lanlalalala ♪」

Morning. As the sky, colored black like shadows, slowly bleached, with a complicated lightly mood, I was humming a melody in an eerily enthusiastic manner which echoed within a room of an inn somewhere inside the royal capital.

「lalaa~, lalanlan♪ lalala~, lala♪」

In the end, because of the several difficult manufacturing processes, I had to reluctantly give up on going to bed that I've been missing over the last 3 months. Using my anger as the fuel for my vengeance soul, I gulped magic potions one after another and rushed the project.

Even after all the stuff that has happened, my body and spirit were fatigued, but it felt like they were saying『Aren't you enjoying it?』as I spent the night immersing myself in manufacturing. The moment I finished the difficult part of the process, I fell into a weird trance. Although I didn't need to drink the low-grade mana potions anymore, I drank all the remaining ones left, because my mind wasn't working properly.

Even though I realized that my conscious state was in a dangerous situation, I rely on the adrenaline that was gushing out as I contemplated the modified necklace. Then, humming the rad*o train*ng music, I stretched my body. If I were to bathe in the sunlight, I should be able to relax from the high tension of the night work.[1]

「『You're so loud!! Do you have any idea what time it is!!』」

「Uooh、so-sorry…」

Suddenly, there was a loud noise across the other room, and in an instant, I went back to my usual self again. Not only it was a long time ago since I stayed at an inn, but I also was all alone during my fugitive days, so I completely forgot about troubling other people.

This is bad, the inns at this level have really slim walls, so it's quite possible that they have heard my moody singing. This is terrible; I want to die so badly, it's really embarrasiiing!!!

「『I've been saying it over and over, shut the fuck up!!』」

[1] [Daily: Not sure why that was censored >.>]

After I dived into my bed and rolled over on it, my neighbor hit the wall once again.
It seems that I haven't yet returned to a completely sane state. My creative ability has hit rock-bottom. Really sorry about that. Because I have fallen into despair, I'm going to sleep.

Although it's been awhile since I have slept in a bed, I can't allow myself to completely fall asleep and oversleep. I wanted to prepare a few things before leaving the city.

Even though the princess has ordered them to stay away from the summoning area until the next day, they should have already realized, and she should be receiving treatment right now. I believe that it will take some time to mend those injuries since quite some time has passed since then, but I want to leave the capital at the end of the day.

Seeing the bed with such a regret, I sat down and leaned beside the window where the light of the day could wake me up as I closed my eyes.

☆

I splendidly overslept, the end.

…… Well, it's because I never would have thought that it would suddenly become cloudy. What about your first time? There is no way that I would have remembered about the weather of the day after the summoning.

That's why the sun has already risen, and it should be approaching noon. Immediately, I checked out of the villa and decided to postpone preparations for my escape. Then, I ate something from a decent food stall and proceeded inside the slums.

It seems that the warning from yesterday served its purpose, since I was able to reach my destination without any hoodlums' interference.

I passed the currency exchange shop while I was at it, but there were other staff who were attending the place. After they saw my face, they bowed in fright, so I decided to grin at them, but I wonder why they seemed to pale even more.
It's not like I'm here to start a fight. Unless I have a reason that is.[1]

As I reached the place where the gargoyles are set, as if yesterday's event never happened (on the contrary, they've been slightly enhanced), I realized that I still don't know the secret password.

Without any time to think, the gargoyles told me 「「*Enter*」」. It's great that they have already made some arrangements.

[1] [Daily: Yeah, wtf, I wonder why?]

And then, after I reached Duphein's base, the bodyguards from yesterday's incident sent me piercing glances.

「It's not like I'll attack you unprovoked. Don't be nervous, aren't you bodyguards?」

While frowning my eyebrows, I talked to them while mixing in a sigh, but I wasn't able to relieve them from their nervousness. Although it is the proper attitude, since dropping your guard in this slum could be lethal, it's not on the level where being tense will make a difference, so I believe that it's disadvantageous if you exhaust yourself being so tense.

When I went upstairs like yesterday, I found Duphein waiting with a smile on his face, and on his desk, there were 4 bags in which the gold coins were divided almost evenly. And inside the small one, there should be the remaining 40 gold coins.

「With this, there should be currency equivalent to 340 gold coins. Do you want to corroborate? 」

「There is no need. The one sitting in that chair isn't someone petty and would take some of the money.」

The real reason is because I considered it a hassle, but I decided flatter him halfheartedly.

「Without further ado, this is the necklace.」

「I thank you from the bottom of the heart, I got something really valuable. Nh? Kh, this is… 」

Duphein, who received the necklace, seemed to realize something. I made sure to apply a disguise which could fool common alchemists and magicians, that's why people with such a level of perception and intellect are hard to deal with.

「Haah, with this, direct negotiations with the royal family will be impossible.」

「Don't you think that it will be funny if you shove it on some noble who is a hindrance to you? Besides, from the start, you didn't even remotely think of using such a high-risk strategy like making direct negotiations with the royal family, so don't try to fool me.」

It's something from the last time; originally the royal family, in brief, the actual king, the queen, and the princess tolerate the slum as a necessary evil; however, they don't want to recognize the existence of the slum. It is because rumors of the demon lord's existence have been propagating rapidly, that the products have been bought out constantly and the prices have been increasing exponentially, leading to the development of the slum's infrastructure.

If negotiations were to be done directly, it is obvious that they would push the blame onto the slum and try to tie them up. They would accuse the slum of working with the thief and

numerous crime slaves will be born, who will then be forced by the kingdom to work, whittling away their lives for the sake of productivity.

If they were to do that, it is quite obvious that it will instigate a rebellion, but we are talking about royalty who thinks that their status is irrefutably theirs. They have never thought of a possibility that it might initiate a rebellion.

By the way, the first time, when they did something similar behind my back and caused a revolt, they framed me, who had just defeated the demon king, by making the citizens believe that I was the one behind it all. I believe that they will try to shift the blame once again, only this time with a different scapegoat.

「Nevertheless, I crushed the possibility of you gaining a favor from some influential aristocrat. That's why I'm going to pay you 20 gold coins for the trouble fee, and if you were to accomplish something I request, then I would add 20 more. Are you interested?」

「I don't mind giving you a discount on the trouble fee or additional fees if you teach me how you were able to add all these modifications in only one night.」

「I lament to inform you that it is a trade secret. Well then, can you do it?」

「I cannot answer you without hearing the details first.」

Duphein shrugged his shoulders a little bit.

「Naturally, my request isn't something so difficult to accomplish. I want you to prepare an alchemic creature like the one that you used to transform into a gold coin to use as my eyes. I want it to be disposable and to be able to magically record a video of what happens at the castle, then disguise itself into something like a bird and return to my side.」

「If they are able to discover its source, the repercussions I receive will be large. The additional fee is 80 gold coins.」

「That's the time to show your skills, 30 gold coins.」

「No, no, it is not about if it's possible or not, but it's about how large the demerits are if I were to fail. 70 gold coins.」

「Che-, anyhow, you will use a method similar to how you collect information from the nobles, won't you? Only that, in this case, the target is going to be the royal family. 50 gold coins.」

「I consider that the risk between doing it to a noble and to royalty differs greatly. 60 gold coins, also, it seems that the sky is beginning to clear.」

Then, in the middle of the negotiation, Duphein who was watching me this entire time, smiles and looks at the window. It looks like he is expressing his intention that he won't budge any more than this.

「……I got it, that's enough. You truly are a greedy glasses bastard.」

「Don't you know that praising me won't change anything? With this, the negotiations are complete. Well then.」

Duphein laughed as if he was mocking me, and after saying that, he pulled out precisely 40 gold coins, counted them, and put them in an empty bag, which he took out from his desk.

If added to the bag that was partially full, it would be exactly 80 gold coins. 20 from the nuisance charges, and 60 from the result of the negotiation, were collected as the result.

「Thus, this is the radio receiver of the "prying eye". If it's activated successfully, it should link and display the recorded video from the transmitting end of the "prying eye".」

Duphein showed me a little bottle that had a gold-colored substance inside of it which felt like metal.

I picked up the little sealed flask and kept it inside my bag.

「Geez, I'm wondering why it is that the good that I asked for just a moment ago had already been made?」

「I lament to inform you that it is a trade secret.」

Duphein seemed to retaliate because of the conversation of while ago, as he smiled sarcastically and laughed.

「Haah~… Well then, I pray that we won't meet again.」

Somehow, even though I'm thinking that it will be impossible after all, but I still used abusive language.

「That's sad. As far as I'm concerned, I don't mind if you visit me.」

I don't know how serious Duphein's response is.

Since I can only imagine that Duphein would always grin like that with whatever response I could give, I decided to leave without saying anything special. I felt that I kinda lost, but I didn't give it another thought.

Nevertheless, I believe that Duphein will pull it off.
The plan's success solely depends on if there's someone inside the royal palace who

could realize the slight difference of the necklace like Duphein; however, she was always wearing the necklace wherever she went in my past life. I don't know if she either has any emotional attachment to it or has a special reason for wearing it, but considering the princess's personality, she will wear the necklace herself without checking it first.

If she does that……

「Ku ku ku, it will be great if she falls into the trap perfectly.」

Thinking when it will be the day, my mood became great. I remembered those days where I was living the life of a fugitive, all the time I was running, and running, and all I was thinking of was my survival. Everyday, 24/7, for one complete year, I wasn't able to live a fulfilling life, because I had to be aware of my surroundings and couldn't even get the time to think of unnecessary things.

I've been thankful for the second chance given to me. Imagining the faces that the king, queen, and knights would have when they see the princess's face warped by the agony next to them, I, in a euphoric mood, was walking the slum's streets.

「Ah, to think that it would be this fulfilling just thinking about all of the people I plan to take revenge on.」

Chapter 12
The Hero makes eye contact

After leaving Duphein's base, I first made my way to the edge of the slums once again.

Although I was going to carefully assess all of the goods I needed to procure the advance payment that I received yesterday, since I screwed up my schedule and had received a generous amount of money before the preparations, I decided to make the bigger purchases first.

Carrying my rucksack stuffed with a sack full of coins (in this world, for all trips on foot, people would normally prepare bags like this), I headed to a part of the slum where there were even fewer people.

Adventurers and employees who changed into filthy clothes were roaming about this street, a really unique business area where it does pay poor people no heed.

This is a black market in which banned articles assemble.
Illegal documents, drugs, stolen goods, curse catalysts, and of course, slaves.

Debt Slaves who lost their place, crime slaves who committed felonies, ransom slaves who were sold for money, and war slaves who were knights from another country that were turned into slaves.

The crime and war slaves are usually forced to work on mines managed by the kingdom. While the rest of them are treated as goods at slave stores.

I don't know how they treat the slaves. The treatment of slaves is all up to the owners, however, they don't usually display the slaves being mistreated or overworked to the point of collapse. Basically, it's because the slaves are expensive merchandise.

Thus, the stores that proudly establish themselves on the capital's main street are slave providers for nobles, which have a lot of quality slaves, but they are required to be bought by nobles, millionaires, or people with letters of introduction from such personage.

So people without connections or the affluence to afford expensive slaves come to buy slaves here in the slums.

I walked around the area aimlessly with the help of my memories from my first life.
As usual, guys who looked rough became pale as soon as they saw me and left the place.

「I was sure that I did *that* to give a warning…… but did I overdo it?」

Thinking that maybe it was a strong impetus, I pondered about how much the information has propagated since yesterday.

To tell the truth, that exchanger staff (Daruma) was an ex-adventurer, a key figure in the upper ranks, known for his skill and competency in using magic to enhance physical strength and create illusions. And I, who one-sidedly overwhelmed him, was considered to be a threat in the eyes of the citizens in the slums whose creed was mayhem.

「Well I don't care, it's better if annoying people don't approach me.」

As I was rounding up such thoughts, I reach my intended destination. With that, I found and entered into a random declining slave shop. To accomplish my objectives, it is much more convenient to prevent myself from entering the eyes of the public as much as possible.

Inside the store, there wasn't anyone aside from me at the counter. After the store manager, who seemed free, evaluated me by looking mockingly from head to toe, he talked rowdily as he didn't consider me as a guest of honor.[1]

「Are you looking for slaves? Excuse me for my impoliteness, but about how much is your budget?」

「I have around 10 gold coins, and I need one person. If you show me the slaves that you could sell me, I will then take a pick by myself.」

Considering my budget to spend for necessary travel goods, and thinking about how much money would I need in the future, I responded with a suitable answer.

By the way, it seems that if you were to buy a slave marketed for nobles from a store on Main Street, you would be spending several gold coins, and depending on the quality, you could end up spending white gold coins. In this slum, you can find everything from cheap to expensive goods, however, the price of a slave is at least 3 gold coins. Since the average slave's price is around 7 to 8 gold coins, if I say that my budget is around 10 coins, I should be able to see most of the slaves.

「Pardon me for my rudeness, but do you really have such a budget on your hands?」

The slave merchant was looking suspiciously in my direction thinking that I wouldn't have that kind of money. If I were a noble's son, I would be buying a slave on Main Street; on the other hand, I look too skinny to be an adventurer. Being able to separate people easily into types from a very young age, he couldn't believe that this greenhorn would have that much cash.

Even though I know his reason for suspicion, I'm still pissed off since he is making light of me.

「……Is this sufficient for you?」

[1] [Daily: Oh boy, here we go again. I feel like I'm reading a CN novel]

I don’t need to restrain myself, so I pulled out a sack of coins from my rucksack and purposely made a noise as I put the sack on the desk while declaring.

「Th-there is no problem at all! I will now lead you to the cages.」

The instant that I had proved that I had gold, he changed his attitude splendidly which made me remember that detestable person and strained my face a little bit. However, it won’t change anything even if I were to shout at this man in front of me, so I decided to just follow him quietly.

In the inner part of the shop, there were cages with iron bars, which had inside of them humans who are probably slaves with their extremities tied up with handcuffs and with dark gazes.

In this world, the notion of essential things such as nutritional science and hygiene didn’t even exist, nevertheless, it was a harsh environment.

I want a slave to use as a disguise the moment I leave the Kingdom’s royal capital. In the end, when they assemble personnel to search for me, they only have limited characteristics to identify me with, just my black hair and strange clothing. Also, if there were two, it would be a lot easier to get out of the city.

There’s also one more reason.

It’s because I need a practice partner for my skills. There are several skills which can’t be trained by oneself. And since I have the Holy Sword of Vengeance, I wouldn’t have any problems since I should be able to detect ill intent. However, I don’t want to make friends or companions, so that’s why I want a slave.

After I use the slave to raise my level skills decently, I will give him some compensation money and free him. And in the worst case where he becomes a thorn for my revenge, then I can just kill him, and I wouldn’t have a problem with it either.

Well, disgusting and evil acts like casting away someone after using him/her just like them makes me want to puke, even if he/she is a slave. If the slave doesn’t become my enemy, I don’t plan to do such a thing.

Since the slave would probably learn the basic skills to survive as he/she will just help me raise my skills’ level, it won’t end like throwing him/her out defenseless. If we establish a business-like relationship between us, that would be the best. I would like to develop a first class relationship which pays each other’s services with justified profit.

That’s the kind of thought I was having.

……So, I’ll be keeping an eye out until I find that certain slave.

「I would recommend the slaves inside this cage since all of them are hard working. If you want one of those slaves, then it will be a little more expensive but within this cell I…….」

「Hey, how about the one hanging in the last cell?」

「Yes? Ah yes, that girl. She is scheduled to be disposed of in the near future. Since I have heard that some honorable nobles who are living in the royal capital prefer that kind stuff, I went to all the trouble of bringing her here. However, she won't quit showing hostility. Even though she's given punishment via the slave seal, she would still show resistance until death's door; so even if her figure is good, since she will try to grab her owner's neck and try to kill the client with the price of her life, nobody wants her anymore.」

Inside the royal capital, religious human supremacy has been deeply establishing its roots. Among them, species like beastmen and any other species different from humans have been receiving abuse. However, inside the kingdom, you usually don't see any beast-kin, and the kingdom can't get along with the Beast-kin's kingdom, located on the opposite border of the Empire, sandwiching the Empire together with the Kingdom. Incidentally, the beast-kin's Kingdom has a dogma of Supremacy of the beast-kin, so there's no difference in the treatment of humans in beast-kin's Kingdom, and beast-kin in the Kingdom; it goes both ways.

「Hey, I've decided. I pick her.」

「What? But… that is a beast-kin, so even if it's contrary to her look, she could still asphyxiate you with her great physical strength……」

「I don't mind. I will pay you 10 gold coins for her so make a contract already, and I won't complain about it later.」

「Haaa~, if that's so, there is no problem on our behalf…… Is it your first time buying a slave?」

「Well, it is.」

「If that's the case, you have to tattoo yourself with a master crest.」

「Master crest?」

「Yes, if you supply mana to the master crest, the carved slave crest will react and cause sharp pain that could restrict the slave's movement to a certain extent.」

But first, I returned to the lobby's counter and signed the purchase contract.

Then, to register for the master crest, I signed on another document.

The contract itself is a magic tool with an integrated magic circle, so when one signs it, it burns itself and a magic circle appears on the back of the one who will be the master, making it a convenient tool.

【System Message: You have unlocked Slave Trainer's Whip Sword.】

It seems that I got a new soul sword, but I will check it out later.

「Lastly, you have to pour mana on your master crest, directly pile it on her slave crest, and put her under your control, then the contract will be done.」

「With that, doesn't the possibility of overwriting the contract with another master crest exists?」

「It's alright. A slave crest will change shape in accordance with the master crest that overwrites it first, and its shape can't be changed or modified until the contract is canceled.」

Returning to the back room once again, I head to the inside of the cell.

I opened the rusted iron bar door which made a creaking sound and entered the prison cell.

「……」

Inside the jail, was a slave. A woman of the rabbit-kin with a gag in her mouth, handcuffs in her hands, which tied her at both ends, and an iron ball attached to her leg, which was a countermeasure for escaping, all tied up.

Having wounds all over her body, she was wearing clothes just in case, which were probably painted black with her blood in several places. Her hair had a color that was too dark to be considered orange, maybe a dark flax color, and her long hair, after being deprived of proper care, was losing moisture, being damaged and dried up.

Her rabbit ears, which was proof that she was a beast-kin, were drooped down, and since she was deprived of food for a long time, her body, which you could tell that it had a great figure from her physique, was underfed. Her arms, legs, and face were thin beyond normal, and her eyes showed tiredness.

I didn't know how long she had been in this state. Her stamina has hit rock bottom, and she is in a state where she couldn't even groan. Obviously, she wasn't allowed to take a bath, so her body was filthy all over, and she was in a terrible condition no matter who saw her. However……

「Yeah, as I thought, you have beautiful eyes.」

Yes, even if she was in this state, only her eyes weren't dead.

The blackest of the black, deep within the shadows; a dark flame that engulfed everything like magma.

Body's wounds gouge the soul.
Usually, it wouldn't be weird if she were to relinquish everything, even her consciousness, and fall into despair.

Even after all that, her eyes were bursting with an unyielding heat as if that was her instinct, her intention.

It's really, really beautiful a gaze for revenge.

Touching her skinny face, I looked into her gaze as if I was peering deep into her.

Aside from detecting ill intention and hostility, the【Holy Sword of Vengeance】can do one more thing: it can see through others' vengeful souls. This holy sword, let me know about her soul of vengeance.

However, even without such a thing, I would be able to realize it.

It's because her eyes which were full of vengeance were extremely clear without any murkiness.

「Do…n't touch… Hu…man.」

Giving a sharp gaze, she showed her teeth with clear intentions of intimidation.

This girl is without a doubt, one of my kind.

A living being who can't be apart from vengeance as they lived.

A being who can't move on without exacting revenge.

Like me, a being who has a burning hot desire compressed deep inside that could perhaps melt everything.

「……」

First off, I should finish with the slave contract.

Storing magic on the back of my hand, I made contact with her slave crest which was located at the nape of her neck.

「Gh-AAAAAAHHHAAAAAH!!」

The slave crest brightened as it reacted with magic, and the carved seal changed its form.

As the light dimmed, the screams from withstanding the pain ceased.

I pulled out HP and MP potions that I prepared for emergencies from my bag, and shoved the contents directly into her mouth.

「NnGhuhh-Gh-uuuu!!」

「With this, you should be able to talk better.」

Since the appraisal soul sword is still sealed, I can't know of her condition. However, it is obvious that she is under a status problem which lowers all her stats.

HP and MP have some kind of correlation with stamina. If her HP and MP are recovered, even if she wasn't able to bring out the usual strength within her, she should still be able to move like normal.

「Why……」

「Who do you want to kill?」

That voice echoed softly within the cell.

I just stare at her dark zeal that dwells deep inside her eyes which are the same color as her hair.

I just ask her about her burning desire.

「You, who do you want to take revenge on?」

Chapter 13
The Way a Certain Beast Girl was Broken Part 1

「There really isn't any food to be found, is there…?」

「Seems that way. You'd think that after all this searching we would've found something at least…」

North of Aurelia Kingdom, there was an impoverished village that lay just before the border of the neighboring Gligar Empire. One particular year, a young girl—who had just become 15 years old—had gone exploring a snow-blanketed forest. She was accompanied by her childhood friend Lucia, who was of a similar age.

In this region, are extreme variations in temperature for each season. Though this usually resulted in bountiful harvests, once every ten-or-so years the village would suffer a poor harvest.

In such occasions, before winter arrived, the villagers would enter the nearby forest in order to gather and store away the last of its blessings.

This year was one such year; they had once again been hit with a poor harvest.
Though they would usually stockpile food in preparation for winter, the temperature dropped sooner than they had expected. As a result, they were unable to store a sufficient amount of food before the forest became blanketed with snow. In an effort to secure more food, a few men of the village embarked on a hunting expedition. In an effort to help, these two children had gone into what was considered a prohibited part of the forest—after slipping past adults' loose supervision.

「Minaris-chan, I'm sorry for making you come here with me. Just because I said that I wanted Keril to have a full belly on his birthday.」

「No, it's fine. Besides, it was me who proposed that we should enter the forest anyway. I feel the same as you do Lucia, I also want to do it for Keril's birthday.」

The smallest of the two girls, Lucia, began shaking her wavy shoulder-length blonde hair, as she attempted to apologize. The other girl simply shook her head, as if saying not to mind it.

The two girls had decided to come here instead of going to their childhood friend's birthday. They were attempting to find something tasty for their friend to eat by entering the forest without telling the adults.
However, the amount of snow that had piled up in the forest this year was more than usual. The trees still had leaves, yet they didn't bear any fruits. Not to mention that the snow concealed both roots and edible wild plants, making their objective much harder to complete.

Regardless, the girls continued to search the interior of the forest from top to bottom. In the village, they had heard about a special fruit that could only be found growing from a certain tree during the cold season. It was said to be extremely delicious.

As the two girls proceeded onwards into the forest, they left a zigzagging trail through the snow. Soon they set foot into the depths of the forest, a place that they were taught to never enter.

「Hey, Minaris-chan, shouldn't we head back soon?」

「Y-yeah. Even though we didn't find any fruit, I guess we probably should…」

Listening to the unsteadiness in Lucia's voice, the girl began to feel a bit more relieved about her own anxiety.
Despite the appearance of the forest remaining unchanged, there was a noticeable difference in the surrounding atmosphere.

Though Lucia, who was nothing more than an average village girl, wasn't able to perceive the change in atmosphere. The one who was feeling more of it, *the one concealing the powers of a beastman,* was the more sensitive girl. It was her who had accurately sensed the change.

They felt as though they could easily become lost in the new, creepier, atmosphere of the forest; it was as though they were in a completely different place. It had been the girl who initially proposed that they search the forest for the fruit, and now she was the one suggesting that they return to the village empty-handed. For her, it was a bitter thing to have to say.

「Well then…」

「Ah, wait. Look at that Minaris-chan!!」

Lucia came to a stop, then turned around and pointed at something hanging from a tree just up ahead.
Though it was slightly difficult to see due to the surroundings, there certainly were several yellow fruits—each about the size of a fist.
Lucia, who found the fruits, reported happily to the young girl, and…

「Thank goodness, it was worth coming here! Let's quickly grab them and leave—
…Uhh…」

The girl fell silent in the next few moments, as the blood dripped from her face.
Upon seeing what had her friend looking so concerned for, the other girl also went pale.

「GUGYURURU……」

There was a single goblin off in the distance.

With its diminutive stature, ugly face, green skin, and abnormal reproductive capabilities; the goblin was recognized as a kind of vermin that could be found anywhere. In fact, they would invade and lay waste to the fields around harvest season. Because of this, adventurers are often hired to exterminate them. Though if there were just a few, the men of the village would gather together and drive them out with force. Despite all this, there had never been an occasion where either of the two girls had seen a goblin, not even from far off in the distance. As such, they would not be thought of as any less of an adult if they were to run away from this one. If it was just escaping from a single goblin, even these adolescent girls could manage somehow.

However, it was the color of its skin that was the real problem. Unlike a goblin's usual green skin, this one had skin that was ultramarine—or deep blue.

「A rare species… 」

The average goblin is generally classified as the weakest kind of monster. Adventurers who would receive quests such as herb gathering would also take on goblin subjugation quests too, as they are one of the recommended targets for first-time combatants.

Even if they're amateurs who had just started to *grow hair*, it would be relatively easy for them to defeat goblins. It was to the extent that they could almost immediately wipe out an entire herd of them without much effort. However, there was a kind of higher-ranked species of a goblin which deviates too much from the strength of the norm is rarely born. The most famous of these variants are goblin soldiers and goblin magicians. However, there are times when another individual who possess a whole different kind of ability will appear. These variants are called "Rare Species".

One of the young girls had once heard about those types of goblins from a group of adventurers who had visited the village in the past.

There was only one difference between this rare goblin and a regular goblin, its skin was tinted with a dark blue. Unlike the goblins that like warm climates, these goblins would only appear in cold areas. Due to their strong cold resistance, their movements wouldn't be slowed down in cold places at all. In addition, they have enough magic resistance to repel weak magic. Moreover, their abilities and intelligence are higher than normal goblins, and they possess a much more ferocious nature.

「Ice… goblin… 」

Unlike the other girl, Lucia didn't know what a goblin was. Despite this, she was still overwhelmed by the goblin's intimidating presence.

Fortunately, the goblin seemed unaware of the two girls. Instead, it appeared to be engrossed in gathering fruits.

「Lucia, calm down and slowly… 」

「No, NOOOOOoooo!!」

「Shh! Lucia!!」

Though the young girl who tried to escape calmly had gone unnoticed, it was a different story for Lucia; who could neither endure the fear, nor hear her friend. Instead she just recklessly fled while screaming in denial.

「Noo, don't. NOOOOO!!」

「Lucia!!」

The other girl noticed Lucia in an abnormal state of panic. The stories that adventurers occasionally shared with the villagers could've been the cause of it.

Nonetheless, even if the girl understood the cause, there still wasn't much she could do to help Lucia. The girl turned around and chased after her friend. When she looked over her shoulder, she saw that the goblin looking for the origin of the screaming. Upon finding Lucia it started laughing, as it had found a better prey.

When it came down to it, the two girls could do nothing but quickly and recklessly run through the forest. However, the goblin's speed was obviously much faster than the girls'.

And surely enough, the distance between the goblin and the girls was slowly being shortened. Under the pressure of the life and death situation, Lucia fumbled. She tripped and fell right at the beginning of the snow covered path that they had used to enter the forest.

「Kyaa!!」

「Lucia!!」

「Ugh, uwah.」

Lucia not only sprained her ankle from the fall, but she also ended up getting half her body stuck in the snow. Even if the girl wanted to assist her friend, she wouldn't be able to. Lucia might be able to stand, but her sprained ankle would slow her down too much for them to escape from the ice goblin.

「Gugyagayagyagya!!」

Upon seeing this, the approaching ice goblin sneered at Lucia.

Though the young girl did have the capability to save her friend. As all beastmen had a hidden power within.
If she held back at all, then the ice goblin wouldn't be defeated; only an all out attack could defeat it. However…

『*Is that clear, Minaris? You're absolutely forbidden from using your powers in public. If you use them, then the illusion magic will fall apart. You'll expose the ears and tails that serve as proof that you're a wererabbit.*』

『*Why is it bad if I'm found out to be a beastman, Mother?*』

『*… Well, I wonder why that is? Our appearance is only a little different after all…*』

「No, NOOO… don't want to die. I don't want to die!!」

(…I'm sorry, Mother!!)

Upon seeing her best friend screaming, the other girl sprang at the goblin while apologizing to her mother for not being able to abide by her instructions.

「UAAAAA!!」

「Guyaa!?」

The girl's flying kick hit the goblin directly in the stomach.
Due to there being a difference in physique, the goblin was sent flying further into the woods. The goblin had been caught unaware by the attack, and was unable to retaliate.

Had this been a normal goblin, the attack just now would've critically injured it. However, let alone being injured, it had barely even been incapacitated. Though as a goblin with a higher intelligence, it came to understand that fighting back would be a poor decision.

The ice goblin picked itself off the ground and retreated deeper into the forest, giving the girls a hateful glare as it departed.

「Lucia!! Are you okay!? Are you injured?」

「Mi-Minaris-chan… that… 」

Lucia's dazed state had quickly turned into panic upon seeing her friend. The cause of this panic was the pair of bunny ears that sat atop the girl' head.

As for the beastmen, even though there are some differences between the tribes, their physical ability is generally quite high. This also applies to their MP, or magic power, too. However, the quality of their magic power differs from humans in that their's is easy to expel once it leaves their body, but it's not suited for long range attacks because of its poor efficiency. Though if they clad themselves with a thin illusion, such a flaw had no significance.

As for this girl's beast tribe ancestry, the wererabbits were exceptionally talented when it came to illusory magic. She had been wearing an illusion all this time, in order to avoid any hardships. However, if she were to unleash the true power of a beastman, then it's

inevitable that the illusion would be completely dispelled due to the strength of the magic power emitted from her body.

「Ah, um, this… I'm sorry, Lucia. I kept silent about it for a long time, until now… Please keep this a secret!!」

「Eh!? Ah, s-sure.」

The girl gave off a smile of relief in response to the other girl's puzzled nod.

Only after telling her mother that she wasn't a baby anymore, did the girl learn about why beastmen like her had to hide their identity. It was then that she finally understood why the people of this country held contempt for beastmen, and treated any who lived there with disdain.

Until now, Mother's instructions had never been ignored. Yet now she was trusting her best friend with keeping her secret from being revealed.

「With this, it's done.」

The illusionary magic which had come undone was cast once again to hide her ears and tail from other people.
Though she had spent most of her childhood with her mother, 4-5 years were spent by herself.

「Then, let's return to the village. Though we couldn't find food, if we stay here we're sure to encounter another monster as it's getting dark.」

「Ah, You're right. Let's go home.」

They returned to the village later that day, just as it had become considerably dark outside. The two girls were harshly reprimanded by the village chief for entering the forest. However, their punishment would be given out tomorrow, so they returned to their families without issue.

The girl informed her mother, Maris, that she had ignored her instructions. And upon divulging the reason, she apologized. Her mother, a sickly woman who spent most of her time in bed, laughed perturbedly and smiled saying, "Oh, you helped a friend".

Though the mother laughed sadly at the girl for some reason, it was of little concern. However, having used her beastmen powers for the first time on a monster who was also one of the rare species, the tired girl slept soundly that day.

That night, the girl dreamt of obtaining lots of fruits for the winter. When the morning sun rose the next day, she was woken up and taken to the center village square. For some reason, the girl's mother was also taken along with her.

「W-what? The punishment that was discussed yesterday? Why is mother…」

A lot of villagers were gathering while the two were being dragged out, confused. While the girl was thinking of why all of those thorny gazes were directed at them, because of what the elder suddenly announced, her mind went completely blank.

「Minaris, and Maris. Is it true that you're both wererabbits?」[1]

[1] [7th: Betrayals... Betrayals everywhere...]

Chapter 14
The Way a Certain Beast Girl was Broken Part 2

「Minaris, and Maris. Is it true that you're both wererabbits?」

She couldn't comprehend the words that she had just heard.

「I'll ask again. Is it true that you, parent and child, are beastmen?」

The words spoken once again by the village elder penetrated her blank head.

(Whywhywhywhy!? Eh, why did he suddenly say that!?)

What filled her spinning mind was a storm of questions. She couldn't process the information. She couldn't understand what was happening.
With her thoughts in disorder, the girl instinctively turned towards her mother as though to ask for help.

Her mother had on a grim expression. Looking as if she had come to some sort of decision, she released the illusion was constantly cast on herself.

The villagers parted simultaneously, and the look in their eyes changed in an instant.

It was the same look they would give the many goblin corpses that they exterminated. Those gazes were concentrated on them by the villagers who had, until yesterday, treated them intimately like family.

「M-mother…」

Listening to the words that changed one after another, the confusion in her head increased at an accelerated pace.

She looked up in a daze. The village chief's eyes held a cold gaze she had never once seen before until now, and they were full of contempt.

……Scary.
This terror overshadowed the Ice Goblin she confronted yesterday; those eyes were scary.

「As you can see, we are wererabbits. I'm sorry for keeping quiet about it.」

Seeing the figure of her mother, who had been flung to the bare ground, saying that with her head lowered, she finally understood that the villagers were directing malicious gazes toward her.

「So what Lucia told us was true……」

「Eh, Lucia did!? That… You're lying!!」

Lucia had promised yesterday. She had said she would keep it a secret.
She surveyed her surroundings, wanting to be told that it was a lie. Her childhood friends stood among the 15~16 villagers.

However, the one she was looking for wasn't there.

Looking this way as though he was looking at trash was her other childhood friend, Keril. And then, trying to cuddle close to him, spreading gossip without being seen by the boy, was Lucia's figure.

「Wh…y…? Didn't you say you would keep it a secret!!」

「Eep!! Keril…」

When the girl spontaneously cried out, Lucia clung to Keril whilst putting on a frightened facade.

「Lucia, it's alright so calm down.」

Saying that, Keril pat Lucia's back gently and then glared at the girl with an even harsher look.

「Oi, don't torment Lucia any more than this!! I couldn't believe it when I first heard, but you really are the worst!! I misjudged you!!」

「Wha!? Just what…」

「Don't play dumb!! I heard everything from Lucia!! You've always been tormenting her!! She cried, saying you threatened her into silence with that beastman power of yours.」

「Wha…」

She realised that her words had actually ceased, that she had become speechless. Rather than her voice, her thoughts had stopped as though the very existence of words inside her mind had disappeared.

「Village chief, I don't care what happens to me, however, please… Won't you please spare this child? At least, at least until this child reaches her 18th birthday…」

Throughout that, Maris hugged her daughter with her head lowered.
Maris had decided to do this yesterday when she heard the story from her daughter. Her daughter would be unable to flee the village while bringing her, as she had a weak constitution. However, she clearly understood that her daughter would, no matter what she said, never leave her behind and escape. Thus, Maris frantically bowed her head for her daughter's sake.

「Please, somehow…」

「Stop kidding!! This filthy beast!!」

What Maris faced in reply were abusive words and stones picked up off the ground.

「That's right, stop joking around!!」

「You've been deceiving us this whole time, how disgusting!!」

「An animal shouldn't be imitating other people!!」

Once the first person started, cutting insults and pebbles continued to rail incessantly down on the two.

「Please, just this child…!?」

「Mother!!」

A largish rock mixed in with the pebbles that came flying hit Maris on the forehead, causing her to bleed.

The girl reflexively covered her mother as though to protect her.

The illusion on the girl was also released amid the extreme chaos, and her tail and ears appeared. Even so, the girl simply continued to shield her mother.

The girl's mother was once affected by an epidemic and managed to recover somehow, but she lost the physical tenaciousness of a beastman and became a mere shadow of her former self. She was weakened to the extent where she would be wounded by having rocks thrown at her by ordinary villagers with no training experience whatsoever.

「Stop, stop it everyone, STOP ITTTT!!」

The girl's wailing echoed throughout the village square, but it was repressed with a wave of jeers.

「Shut up, the spawn of a monster should stay silent!!」

「Don't speak with the words of humans, you beast.」

「Die, why are you alive, hurry up and die already!!」

Creak, crack. She understood that a dark fissure was forming in her heart.
It felt like she was *being struck with the pointed stake** from before.[1]

Why? What's the reason? No, it hurts; her heart hurt more than her body.

When she looked around from her crouching position, she saw Keril throwing rocks in support of the villagers, not to mention still glaring at her with an intense look. She also saw Lucia clutching at Keril's sleeve while hiding behind him so he couldn't see the twisted, mocking smile on her face.

And then her head, body, and heart finally understood.

She had been betrayed. She had been betrayed, she had been betrayed, she had been betrayed, she had been betrayed!!

「Why, why…」

Tears welled up. The stones hailing down on her body had driven a wedge in her cracked heart. Right before her heart completely broke, the momentum of the rain of stones stopped.

「What is this commotion about!?」

The ones who appeared were the men of the village.
The men seemed to have returned from their expedition earlier than expected, and although it wasn't much, they brought with them some hunted game.

「Fa…ther… **sniffle** Father!!」

Despite her vision being blurred with tears, she still saw her father among the people who returned.
The girl felt reassured; she would be saved with this. Her father was an influential man in the village and was expected to be its next chief.
Relief swelled inside her when she saw him discuss something with the villagers. Ah, she was sure to be saved with this…

「You're wrong!! I have nothing to do with this, I didn't know!!」

「 」

When she turned around, her world was turned upside-down. It warped and collapsed.

「I was deceived by this woman!! Damn this filthy beastman.」

[1] [Daily: Metaphorically]

Her ears turned deaf. Her eyes lost sight. Her nose was ineffective. She couldn't feel a thing.

「What is this. Eh? What… is this…」

Kashan. In the end, she felt like she heard the sound of something breaking.

Then, the girl's world completely collapsed.

☆

When she came to, the girl was being jolted around on the wagon of a slave trader.
In her dim world, she faintly recalled being sold off for dirt-cheap by the being she thought was her "Father".

The reason the girl regained her will despite being on the brink of becoming a cripple was because of the presence of her mother beside her.

A parent-and-child beastmen couple, they couldn't expect decent treatment even as merchandise.

The meals they were given were clearly inferior to the other slaves'. They were whipped and abused for no reason or meaning. They were forced to use the dirty water after the others had bathed, or even kicked and called "smelly" and "dirty" without being given a chance to bathe.

Using the excuse of them being beastmen, and thus having the superior physical ability, they were chained to the moving wagon and made to run while being dragged along.
The feeling of not wanting to become a burden to her weakened mother was the only thing that sustained the crushed girl's spirit.

However, no matter how much the girl tried to avoid burdening her mother, it was nothing more than pouring water on hot stone. The beautiful girl's mother became worn-down as though she had been filed with a rasp.

The slave trader chose the girl's mother as a sacrifice.
Saying, *"the beastmen are being tormented,"* and, *"they receive worse treatment than yourselves,"* he made a display of them to let the other slaves vent.

Just like the slave trader expected, the other slaves sneered when they saw them.

They watched the girl being lashed, watched the mother being lifted up by her hair, and watched the two being sent flying with a kick to the back. They sneered, as though they were watching an interesting play.

It was half a year after the girl had been bought by the slave trader; when they were halfway to the royal capital, the girl's mother became unable to move.

The girl's world became hollow once again, and she fell into this vacant world.

She stopped caring about mud being mixed into her food. She became numb to the lashes and abuse. She also lost the motivation to resist when they covered her in mud and called it bathing.

「Tch, so she broke. Brittle despite being a beastman, geez. There are nobles who like this kind of thing so there's no hope for her future, really.」

The girl simply gazed at the sighing slave trader with vacant eyes.

「At any rate, your mother went and died of her own accord. Why do I have to lose the purchased money for you beastmen, damnit.」

With a jolt, the broken fragments reacted to the slave trader's words.

(Why…?)

The question arose, like poison gradually welling up.

(Why? What did I do wrong? Since when was I wrong? What should I do to make it better?)

The questions that started to overflow in one go as though spouting out made the wreckage that lost its light change into gooey magma.

(Who's fault is it? Why am I here? Who am I? What am I here to do? What is this feeling?)

The fragments that remained all turned to magma.
Magma that became a warped, deformed, grotesque shape, as though wriggling, as though twisting around, as though it was churning.

And then the reformed heart had only one genuine emotion.

「Ah, I… want to break them.」

Just as she recognized the words she unconsciously let out, the frozen emotion came gushing forth.

It was hate.

Hate, hate, hate, hate, hate, hate, hate, hate, hate. Just hate.

I hate Lucia, I hate Keril, I hate the one who was her father, I hate the village chief, I hate the villagers.

I hate the slave trader who made a laughingstock of mother and me, I hate the slaves who sneered at us when we were ridiculed by the slave trader.

I'd like to torture, I'd like to injure, I won't forgive them, I'd like to break it, I'd like to twist, I'd like to gouge, I'd like to snatch away, I'd like to pulverise, I'd like to crush, I'd like to smash, I'd like to slash, I'd like to make them choke, I'd like to burn, I'd like to skin, I would like to stab, I'd like to tear, I'd like to kill, I'd like to kill, I'd like to kill, I'd like to kill, KILL KILL KILL KILL KILL KILL!!

The inside of her heart was simply filled to the brim with just that.

After that, she stopped listening to a single thing the slave trader said.
Each time she showed a rebellious attitude, she was punished through various means, but still the fever that burned inside her wouldn't forgive them.

Even if she was tortured and punished to the point where she could no longer move, even if she was on the brink of death, that fever was the only thing that wouldn't disappear.

Arriving at the royal capital, her glaring hostility did not wane despite pain being transmitted through the slave crest.

Before long, the days of simply being chained to the wall without sufficient food, clothing, or bathing started. The days where she just deludes herself, fantasizing about achieving revenge with the utmost cruelty in her fantasies. She stopped being given even a single meal a day, as though they thought it was not needed if she was going to be disposed of when those days soon came to a close.

She might die like this. No, she was sure to die.
The fever that did not disappear even when she was on the brink of being able to sense death writhed inside her body.

No matter how tenacious a beastman, if they did not have the minimal amount of food at least, they wouldn't last long. Already her consciousness grew hazy, and she could feel nothing but the heat inside her feverish body.

「Yeah, as I thought, you have beautiful eyes.」

Amid that, a voice resonated within her still-burning dim consciousness.
Before her eyes was an unfamiliar person; no ability to think rationally remained, and she could only conclude that he was the same as the several nobles who had turned up when they first arrived in the capital.
Without the strength to rage like she did back then, she could only intimidate him by glaring at him with bare hostility.

But even so, she felt a hint of something familiar in the man's pupils that drew her in for some reason.

「Do…n't touch… Hu…man.」

Her mouth, which was bereft of moisture, moved and forced out some words.

「Gu… aaaAAAaaaaah!!」

Then, pain ran throughout her body, causing her already hazy vision to flicker even more.

It felt like an old wound was being forcibly gouged out. A scream was squeezed out as though it was wrung out from that part of her body.

Just when she thought the waves of pain had lessened, an unknown bottle of liquid was thrust into her mouth.

「Nng… Ghhhhh!!」

The liquid she was forced to swallow without her having the strength to resist or spit out allowed her emaciated body to recover from its languid state.

Her magic always felt insufficient due to not having decent meals or rest, but now it even managed to recover to about half.

「With this, you'll be able to talk for a little while.」

The girl couldn't comprehend the meaning behind the man's words. Generally speaking, with her cognitive ability restored, she understood that what she was made to drink were HP and MP potions.

Neither of them were things to give to a slave girl. In general, although it wasn't beyond one's grasp, they were something that could be considered to have quite a high price.

「What…」

To the girl, this was enough to make her wary of some trap, thus, she received a shock when she heard the words that came next.

「Who do you want to kill?」

The shock was similar to the one from when her mother died, when she was prompted by the slave trader's words, and realized that her heart had reconstructed itself.

「You, who do you want to take revenge on?」

That man—that young boy seemed no different from herself when she peered into his eyes; the girl understood why she felt a sense of familiarity and was drawn to those pupils.

What was there was something similar to the fever that she had seen burning inside her for a long time.

The familiarity was natural. As for why, it was because of the eyes that were the same as hers.

That was why the girl spoke spontaneously.

「The girl who was my friend and… the boy who was my childhood friend and… dad and… the village chief and… the slave trader and the slaves.」

「Do you only want to kill them?」

She realized it was a mocking tone of voice, and yet she sensed the signs of him wanting her to speak.
However, such a thing was trivial to the girl.
It was a desire she had repeated in her delusions many times and, before long, had been etched not in her reasoning, but in her instincts.

「It's no good to just kill them, it's no good unless I torment, torture, make them scream, slowly deprive them of sleep, then break, break, break them to exhaustion. To simply kill them, that's too much of a waste.」

Saying that, the girl smiled for the first time since becoming a slave.
The boy before her also smiled at the words that gushed out from the depths of her heart.

Chapter 15
The Hero and His Accomplice are Laughing

「Just killing them is no good. Make them scream from suffering and torment, and when all they want to do is lie down and close their eyes—break, break, and break them some more, push them to the brink until they become completely useless. However, to simply kill them, wouldn't that be too good a fate for them?」

Tempted by the words of the girl who was laughing as though she was broken somewhere, the corners of my mouth edged upwards.

「Now then, what I have prepared before you are two separate paths that you may choose from. The first path ends with just me and you in a Master and Slave relationship. If you choose this path, after serving the purpose for which I am buying you, I will give you the power to live alone as well as some money, and I will free you from being a slave. If you are skillful enough, you might even be able to find a way to be happy with what remains of your life as well.」

「……」

「That well-worn lump of emotions, maybe you might become able to crush those painful memories and become able to bury it all deep in your chest and then seal it away. If you can come to do that, then there might be a future in which you might once again find laughter.」

It sounded like a ridiculous tripe.
It was a future neither I nor she wished for.
Still, I continued to say the words clearly and concisely.
I merely told her of one of the possible future outcomes.
What will happen to our future selves, I do not know.
Though the possibilities are good for revenge, one day, you might even be able to live without thinking about it.

It is for this reason that we were having this discussion.
From here on, I will talk about the other choice available because I could say with certainty that this choice will crush the other.

「Or there's the other path, which concerns us being comr-… all-…」

Comrade? Ally?
Regardless of the word, it stops before fully forming.

「Hah… I guess it would be different… with me.」

What came out there was an unconscious monologue.

A Partner? An Ally? What I am looking for is neither one of those things.
Such flimsy bonds; in no way are they adequate words to call this relationship.
I need a name to reflect the optimism of the relationship in which we will be bound by.

Therefore, I am sure of the appropriate name for our contract.
It is a name that a person who lives in the clean and just world would absolutely refuse to adopt.
The name of the person who accomplishes the sin of revenge is no doubt the most fitting.

「You and I are the same. Both of us obsessed with vengeance, so how would you like to become my “accomplice” and enjoy our revenge together?」

Saying this, I held my hand out in the air and the construction of the Heart Sword began.

Black lights flew together until the form of a sword took shape, a double-edged sword about 50 centimeters in length.
The edge of the blade got covered in blood, but also tied around it was something like flickering black flames along the whole length of the sword.
When peering into the gloom of the bottomless darkness surrounding the sword, there is only the feel of misfortune, yet it coexists with a divine judgment that can freeze you down to your very spine.

The only suitable purpose for it in battle is to change its form to that of a Long Sword, but for the necessary usage of it here, it needs to remain in this form.
This is the first manifestation of the【Holy Sword of Vengeance】, and gripping the hilt, I cut away the chains shackling the girl’s hands and then thrust the sword into the floor before the girl.

「If you choose the former, then just turn your back now. If you choose the latter, though, then you must take hold of this sword. However, you must be resolute in this decision! If you take hold of this sword, you will never be able to turn back. You can never again return to that clean world; instead, you will become forever bound to carry out revenge or die trying, no other avenues will remain.」

「……」

「Let this sword change the burning anger in the depths of your soul into undying flames of vengeance. Whatever happens, until you exact complete vengeance, you will never be able to stop seeking it out. After that, those you seek vengeance on, I shall as well, for we share our enmity. And as such, the targets of our revenge will increase. It shall come to be that those you hate, I too shall hate. And vice versa. Ah, afterwards, if things go well, you may also learn a peculiar skill that might synergize with you, if I remember correctly.」

「… Will you betray me?」

There, in all respects were eyes of the deepest, darkest gloom.

Ah, I understand that look.
I understand why she needs more than a shoddy verbal promise.

「If this contract is made, it will be impossible to harm each other. This isn't something as fragile as a verbal bond: if you die, I die. If I die, you die.」

The girl's eyes twitched in reaction.

As well as not betraying, the constraints of not being able to betray the counterpart are there.
Spare me from being betrayed twice.
Also, I am sorry that you became someone who was betrayed in the same way.
If not for this sword's ability, I would never have proposed this plan.

After I finished talking, my hand parted from the sword handle.

「Of course, there is also the path which allows you to take revenge by yourself. The number of those I seek revenge on is many. Furthermore, the number of those I hate is also many, and so it can be seen as a bit of a demerit. Well, I would only be happy to find that you would become my accomplice.」

「… Why do this?」

The slave girl voiced a question.
But I knew her thoughts were not of doubt.
It was just a confirmation.
Just further consideration as to whether the other party is also of like mind.
Therefore, I stopped hiding behind words. With a wide grin and looking as if afflicted by a touch of madness, I cackled evilly.

「Isn't it already decided? Rather than alone, wouldn't revenge be much more fun if you shared it with another person? Even if the number of people increases so much, to be able to torment, break, and destroy so many, would it really take up so much of your time? However, I have *no need* of someone who just wants to kill and not truly seek revenge… You aren't like that though, right?」

「Ku… Ahahahahahaha~!!」

And so, that girl, delighted to her core like myself, showed upon her face a smile similar to mine.

「It's good isn't it? That's right, that is indeed how an accomplice should be! Ah~ certainly, if it's you, it might be possible. Yes, with you I will definitely be able to have worthwhile revenge! Yes, rather than alone, they will be pushed down into the darkest depths of despair!」

When she finished laughing, a pure smile like that of the Holy Mother lit up her face, and the eyes which were crazy before now had a spark of light in them.

「Then, I don't need to think any further. Will my desire for revenge not fade away? That's for the best. To keep those flames burning, all I have to do is forget the pretense about ever returning to those days? It's impossible for me. When compared to the possibility of returning to those days, it makes me want to puke, and then the number of my enemies increase? I don't see a problem with that! There's no way that becoming an accomplice and being able to carry out an even greater revenge isn't already the best way to go!」

「Then, you should take the sword. The sword will teach you the way.」

Thus, after I said that, the girl put her hand on the hilt and pulled out the【Holy Sword of Vengeance】which had been thrust into the ground before her.

In an instant, the【Holy Sword of Vengeance】, though covered in darkness, cast a flickering light that scorched the eyes.
It was proof that the sword recognized the girl's desire for revenge. The light that was for the sake of blessing the girl's revenge.

「Ah, come to think of it, I have yet to hear your name.」

「Name? My name is Minaris.」

「Is that so, my name is Ukei Kaito.」

「Ukei Kaito… Is this the name of my lord?」

As I said so to the girl, Minaris, for the first time without the madness, a light picturesque smile came across her face.
And doing so, she put the【Holy Sword of Vengeance】against the area around her chest.

「Please treat me well after this, my accomplice, Minaris.」

「Yes, I will be in your care as well, my lord accomplice.」

As Minaris tilted the sword so the point was against her chest…

She plunged it deeply into herself.

Chapter 16
Appetite of Hell

As the sword in Minnalis' chest gave off a strong light and faded like faint spores of light melting in the air right after.
It didn't leave any wounds on her body, and the clothes she wore should definitely have been pierced, but there was no tear to be found.

「Ah, I see. So that's the reason for your vengeance?」

「What I saw just now… was that my master's reason?」

Having our paths bound together by the【Holy Sword of Vengeance】, I understood that mine and Minnalis' personal revenge had been changed and became intertwined into one.

What happened was the vivid experience leading up to our reasons for revenge flowed directly into each other's brain.
It was so realistic that it felt as if it was my very own memory. The insides of my body began to burn intensely as I raged at the feeling of pain and despair that fueled Minnalis' pledge for revenge, as it slowly engraved itself into my being.
But the dark zeal she possessed was not at all inferior to my own.

Minnalis, having felt my reason through the oath of vengeance as well, was completely mortified.

And little by little, our desires for revenge intertwined together, more deeply and more purely until they became one.

When the last spores of dark light from【Holy Sword of Vengeance】faded away, all the feelings of revenge that Minnalis harbored became mine, and all the feelings of revenge that I harbored became hers.

「Well, even though I went through with this, it doesn't mean I fully understand it. It's more like a joint ownership of our desires for revenge.」

When I looked around, the slaves all looked like targets for revenge, and it made my blood boil, so I naturally began leaking bloodlust.
The slaves who had lifeless eyes also felt the sudden threat to their lives and huddled up in fear.

【System Message: Title『Master Avenger』acquired.】
【System Message: The individual Minnalis has become a『Subordinate Avenger』.】

Because of the System Message, I precisely confirmed the effects of the【Holy Sword of Vengeance】.

Turning to Minnalis, it looked like she's a little perplexed after sharing the oath of our vengeance, yet she too possessed a somewhat excited face.

「Amazing, is this the power of the sword from before? With this- ah, ahh, to think that it could be even more amazing!!」

Minnalis' face flushed when her imagination sent pleasurable sensations up crotch her back, and in some respects, it was like orgasmic pleasure, causing the corners of her mouth to twist.

「Status Open • Minnalis」

Minnalis | 16 years old | Female | Rabbitkin
HP：160/208(416)　MP：　189/206(412) Level: 18
Strength: 105 (211) Stamina: 111 (222) Endurance：85 (171) Agility：139 (278) Magic Power：123 (247) Magic Resist：95 (191)
Inherent Skill:『Poisonous Demonic Phantasm』
Skills:『Illusion Magic Lv3』『Pain Resistance Lv2』『Collecting Lv2』
Condition: Weakened

I was relieved when I found that I was able to examine her status properly.
Obtaining the effects of the『Holy Sword of Revenge』and earning the title of [Subordinate Avenger], I gained the ability to examine the status of the designated person.
In addition to [Subordinate Avenger], it seemed like there were a few modifications to her status. They were mainly adjustments due to her thirst for vengeance which were mostly because of the joint-ownership of each other's revenge and the addition of the title.

While assessing the status of Minnalis, it was as I thought, beastmen have high stats. Despite being in a "weakened" state and having her stats reduced to half, it was comparable to a human's status.
Given that I haven't used the Appraisal Spirit Sword before, I have no idea what abilities it has, but it seems like you could acquire a skill from it. But it seems that only the owner of the skill themselves will come to understand how to use it without any issue.

「So, what will you do next? If it's too painful, you can just take a break and leave it to me, alright?」

「Through hearing things like this, I understand that my master is really this kind of a bully. It's no good to try and settle it like that. Because this is the start of my revenge, please allow me to do it.」

「Is that so? Then it's better for you to prepare for the time being. As for that person who ran away, I'll bring him back.」

Saying that, I handed over the remaining MP potions to Minnalis. Though from her earlier tone, she might try to use her Innate Skill. I think it's more than likely that those MP potions will be consumed.

So I chased after the man who tried to escape through the streets.

☆

The slave dealer immediately escaped from that place after the suspicious customer in unfamiliar black clothes, who was supposed to only be buying a slave, suddenly took out an ominous short sword.

From the beginning, even if they were suspicious, as long as they possessed money and have the intention of purchasing some goods, then all would be well. The commercial price of the slaves in there were as low as four gold coins at most. Those dealing with large quantities there were the inexperienced ones. So he thought he'd try selling the customer one of the high-priced slaves, but the only one the customer was interested in was the rabbit beastman he had planned to scrap.
Because the cost of food was nothing to scoff at, he kept that beastman tied up in chains until the day came to rid of her, so when a customer showed interest in her, he hesitated on whether or not he should try selling him an expensive slave instead.
However, when he took the moment to consider that it would clearly be profitable if he were to sell something he'd planned to throw away, he then stated that the price was 10 gold and unconsciously smiled.

Things started to go in a strange direction when the customer started talking about forming a contract with the slave. The slave dealer thought it was strange that he forced a dying slave to drink a surprisingly expensive potion. Then, a dangerous conversation he didn't understand all that well started. When the man that was a customer took out a small ominous black and red sword, his sense of danger was triggered.

He understood that that was bad at first glance.
That well-honed instinct that he sharpened in order to trade in the slums was loudly screaming in his head. Gold and slaves, was his life worth all that?

Moved by his instincts, the man cautiously ran away so as not to draw their attention. He jumped out of his own shop carrying only the gold he had stashed for emergencies, hidden in the counter at the storefront.

He rushed towards the hideout that he had prepared beforehand without turning around. The door to his hideout entered his line of sight after his moving feet was almost entangled while taking multiple detours.

「Oi, oi! Where are you going, leaving your customers like that?」

The man that was his customer appeared right before his eyes with a smile.

☆

「!! Ah, n-no, wait, there's an urgent matter…」

The slave dealer paled and spat out those words in an instant. Then, he began to run at full speed and jumped into an alley on the side of the street.

Of course, there was no reason to let that man who was a target of his partner's vengeance to escape. He struck him with a single blow to the back of the head to make him faint. If he didn't pay close attention in order to not kill him, the man's neck probably would have been bent in the wrong direction.

I can't afford to let my emotions control me and steal Minnalis' prey before she starts taking her revenge.

For the time being, my intention is just to assist Minnalis, leaving her to claim her own vengeance. I guess I should thoroughly understand her feelings before lending a hand. The【Holy sword of Vengeance】only showed us the memory which was the catalyst to our revenge. The rest of the partner's memory remained unknown.
If we do not properly talk about it, regardless of how she was tormented, I won't fully understand her suffering. I would just instantly kill them due to the burning hate.

I raised up the man who fell down and returned to the slave dealer's building.
There, the slaves had already been relocated into the largest cell, and Minnalis was doing something at the back, in the kitchen. The cell was already housing about twenty slaves, but there was still a lot of unused space remaining.

「Hey, I brought him.」

「Ah, thank you very much, my lord. I have my hands busy in the meantime, so could you throw him in that cage?」

「Hmm? Alright.」

「Guu…!!」

I took the cell key that was hanging on the wall and then threw the man into the open prison cell and hung it back. He seemed to have woken up from the impact of being thrown onto the solid stone pavement, and he then proceeded to look around, trying to figure out his situation.

「Argh, oi, you! What are you trying to do…!?!」

「It's done~! Ugh, Uuuuu, what is this, I'm getting dizzy…」

Drowning out the man's voice was another one from the kitchen which possessed a mood unfit for this kind of situation. No, it was a voice in high spirits.

Hearing the voice, he faced the kitchen. Minnalis, who was a little erratic was there with a lovely smiling face wrapped in joy.

「It is because you consumed so much MP all at once… Here, take another MP potion just like the one I gave you a little while ago, drink it quickly.」

「Yesss. Kufufu, hey my lord, could you give it to me mouth-to-mouth?」

「I won't.」

「Eeh~, why not?」

「Because I'm not thirsty enough to accompany a drunk that has become lost in a high after losing their MP.」

Once you lose your MP, you become drunk due to the magic in the air. If it's not too much, then the drunkenness would just be a bit of lightheadedness… but in more severe cases, the effect would be similar to someone in high spirits as if they were drunk. Furthermore, even if their MP recovers, it does not mean that those who become drunk will sober up immediately.

Checking her status, a little while ago her MP was still at 90%, but now, it had fallen below 10%. By the way, the MP consumption of a basic Fire Ball that can be used in real combat was about 10 MP, so it can be said that a lot of MP has been used.

Not to mention that Minnalis obtained a powerful skill, her tension was welling up, and the passion of her hatred was on the verge of spilling out. When she returned to her senses, I'll be considerate and leave her alone.

While thinking that way, I stuffed an MP potion into her mouth just like the first time, and the blue liquid was swallowed in an very erotic way.

「Fuu~, as I thought, my lord is mean.」

「Hey, hey, how long are you going to space out for, the main dish is waiting.」

「Yesss, kufu- kufufufuu!!」

It seems unlikely that the cheerful Minnalis will need any more help, so I decided to enjoy the subsequent play as a spectator.

Minnalis, as if having happy emotes floating atop her head, turned the gloomy atmosphere of the prison into one of excitement when she brought the prepared food inside.

It's a massive amount of food that looked impossible to be carried in all at once that Minnalis had cooked with the ingredients stored by the slave dealer in the kitchen.

「Well, these are fresh dishes that I made. Enjoy them to your hearts content♪」

From the freshly-made cooking came an appetizing aroma. Naturally, the slaves and the dealer's faces shook with wariness when they saw Minnalis.

「Hmph~, you might say that, but it's not like you can eat it easily, right? Then I will have you, who looked at me and my mother with eyes as if you were looking at dirty filth until we reached the Capital, experience it first.」

「Hii-…!!」

Minnalis, while widely grinning, looked at the only man who had the shackles for slaves on with predatory eyes.

With her increasing magic power, most of Minnalis' deep flaxen eyes began emitting a faint sparkling light, turning those areas hazy white.

「Mystify and devour『Poisonous Demonic Phantasm』.」

It was like the whispers of a witch.
A gentle, sweet, hollow voice that would charm you.

「Hiii, hiiaaaahh, what is this, stop, aaaaaaaaaahh!!」

His voice along with his appearance became veiled with white mist.
The slaves around the slave dealer couldn't do anything. Nevertheless, without being able to look away, the voice made his face turn pale in fear of the unknown.

「Guaah, aaaaaaaaah!! Food, hand me the food eeeeeeeeeeeeh!!」

After the white mist that was coiling the man disappeared as if inhaled by him, he started acting crazy.

As if he had forgotten being shackled, he tried to run, tripped over his feet and collapsed; unable to stand up, he started to crawl as if he were an animal. Stuffing the piping hot food in his mouth, the scene of him thrusting his face in the food is one that states that there weren't a shred of human dignity left in him.

「Hmm, this illusion has a stronger effect than I thought. It seems like it did wonders in instilling a sense of hunger but regulating it is difficult.」

Minnalis observed the form of the man greedily eating the food while laughing.

That said, he was just eating the food. The target of Minnalis' rage and hatred, who I had thought will be facing a far more miserable experience, and only being done something to this degree left me puzzled.

「Now, I'll have the rest of you become the same. This time it will alright, because I'll instill in you a sense of hunger so you'll slowly… very slowly lose reason…… Mystify and collapse『Poisonous Demonic Phantasm』」
「No, khhhh」
「Ahhhh… Urgh…」
「Argh, ughhhhhh…」

Once again, the white mist appeared and wrapped around the people and entered them. But, this time it did not become a situation like the man losing his reason and rushing to the food.

Still, some began to extend their hands to the food timidly, after a while, their sense of hunger increased gradually until it couldn't be endured any longer, and everyone reached out for the food. Though everyone managed to keep some reason at first, but before long, they began to be crazy about the food.

Minnalis smiled while observing the situation, looking with eyes full of affection. Her eyes, like from someone who planted flower seeds and watered the soil, a glance that awaits for those seeds to bud.

Those buds will soon sprout, just a little more…

「Uuh…? Agh, Gyaaaaaah!?」

「Aah, it's budding♪」

And the one who sprouted first, was the one who she planted the ability on first, the man.

In that moment the edge of her mouth lifted up as if the wickedness that awaited to burst out was revealing itself.

「Guu, gaahh, goaaaegee!!」

The first change that appeared was in his arm, it started to shrink and the color started to be dyed green. Yes, it seemed as if it was a goblin's arm.

The humans addicted to the food now stared petrified at the sight of what's happening before them.

For a moment the man crouched down from the acute pain that ran through his body , he was perplexed by his arm that completely changed but immediately was attacked by the feeling of hunger and started to eat the food again

「Now, please eat more and more. The more food you eat, the closer to a goblin you will become, but that shouldn't be a problem, right? Soon you'll feel so hungry that such things no longer matters. Ku fu, ku fufufu ~.」

「No, noooooo.」
「U-ge ~ Ugeeeeee~ Gue~」
「Gofee~, oga~, goee~」

The majority tried to vomit the food in a hurry when they heard those words.
But that resistance was laughable, as the feeling of starvation grew like a snowball rolling downhill, getting bigger and bigger.

「Aah, guu~, I mustn't, but, Uguu~, I can't endure iiiiiiittt!!」
「Ugh~, Gaa~, Ugu~; Whateveeeerrrr!!」

No matter how much they struggled, they weren't able to withstand the hunger that has been reinforced with magic, and as if a dam collapsed they started to eat the food again. Gradually the goblin transformation became more and more apparent.

「Ahh, how miserable, how ungraceful!! What are you feeling now, you all who have fallen below the beastmen you have scorned like monsters? How are you feeling right now? Hey, please answer me, isn't it cruel to ignore me? Kufu~, Kufufufufufu~!!」

「Gugiiiiiii~!!」

She tramples down the arm of the goblin that was in the cage that she was looking at, through a gap in the cage. It was the arm of the slave dealer.

However, even though he stopped eating for a moment because of the pain from his arm, he immediately went back to eat

「Kufufufu~, hey, are you that crazy about my food as to not let it go anymore? Come come, you can eat as much as you like, there is still more left.」

「Guga~, Gugyaaaaaaaa~」

The sound of them stuffing themselves in anguish and agony echoed loudly in the room. It was the anguished voice coming from the changes happening to his body.

「Oh, it seems I have another perfect goblin, it's so nice that they're eating a lot of my food. Kukuku.」

The first one to sink their teeth into the cooking, was also the first one to have his body changed entirely into a goblin. Although he had been a man with an ugly face before, now it was even more grotesque especially after he had clawed at his distorted body.

「By the way, my food becomes a lethal poison which causes you to die in severe pain if eaten in large quantities you know? How does it feel to know that you will die but are not able to stop eating? Do you hear me, oh but even if you can talk you can only say gugyagugya though.」

Most of them quickly changed from human into a goblin, and all sense of reason had vanished, moving only to gobble down the food.

As they ate, they underwent the goblin transformation and as they turn into goblins, they felt pain from the poison.
At the breakneck pace they were stuffing their faces with food, it was impossible for them to stop even if they understood what was said. It was just impossible for them to stop. With what's left of their sanity, instinct overrode all reason making it so only their hunger drove them further.

The appearance of the goblin-ified former slaves and slave dealer filled Minnalis with satisfaction.

「Kufufufu!! Die die die!! Suffer, suffer more!! Die after you cannot endure suffering anymore!! Like the time mother died after being defiled in a miserable way. Die in the most cruelest and disgraceful way!! Ahaha… AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAH~!!」

A goblin who had already completely lost his original form was still suffering, watching it having taken a deep interest in the food, Minnalis stamped down on the back of its neck and twisted her foot from side to side.[1]

「Hey hey hey, there is still more to be eaten!! Hahaha, Kufuahahah!!」

Minnalis' laughter was filled with ecstasy and for quite some time the laughter reverberated, accompanied by the sounds of the goblins' screaming unceasingly, until only silence fell.

[1] [Enzou: she's like stepping on his neck, and pushing his face in the food like she's putting out a cigarette.]

☆

That day, the slave shop in the corner of the slums had been mysteriously destroyed, and the people inside vanished.
A few days have passed and a man came to steal from the slavers since the building was left unattended.

The man who came to steal saw a pile of goblin corpses giving off a strong rotting stench.

Chapter 17
The Hero will help a bit 1

It did not take long for the living beings inside the cell to perish.

They all had turned into a pile of goblin corpses. With that, part of Minnalis' revenge had been completed. Minnalis' passion had been ignited, and now, that same burning passion that had become a part of me cheered in delight and ecstatic joy.

I shook with delight at the sight of those that turned into monsters and helplessly devoured their food even though they knew that it will lead to their demise.
Every time I heard the cries of pain from the slave dealer and the slaves as their bodies gradually warped. And each time I heard their screams of agony from the monster poison. I felt shivers of excitement run down my spine.

「Good, that's really good, Minnalis. Instilling the feeling of starvation, having the food change them into monsters, and then killing them by using the monster poison already inside of it! As I thought, my eyes did not deceive me.」

These heartfelt words unconsciously spilled from my mouth.
I was unbearably pleased. This girl thought through about what she needed to do in order to really make them suffer.

Be that as it may, but the words I told Minnalis were not just simple lip service. They resulted from what she had shown me.
The pleasant sensation caused by Minnalis exacting her first bout of vengeance coursed through both our bodies.

「Ah, finally… I've finally gotten one of them, Mother.」

In the center of the prison, littered with the corpses of the humans-turned-goblins, was the silhouette of Minnalis with both of her hands to her chest.
Her praying figure exuded a solemn feeling, and her peaceful face showed that she had finally achieved vengeance against one of her targets. This was her first taste of true vengeance.

It was indeed the appearance of a demon of righteous vengeance. As she basked in its afterglow, I simply watched without speaking, knowing I couldn't disturb her.

☆

「Well then, are you ready to go?]

She basked in the afterglow for a while, but I couldn't have let it go on forever, so I tapped Minnalis' shoulder before calling out to her.

「…Yes, thank you. It was because of the power you, my lord, have granted me that I was able to take revenge.」

「It's not a big deal. This isn't a one-way relationship. What I want from you is a mutual relationship. Furthermore, from the moment you chose to take revenge, we began carrying our revenge together. Your revenge is my revenge, and my revenge is your revenge. Didn't I say so? That was the contract, and for this reason, we are accomplices.」

So I said, but Minnalis shook her head in disagreement.

「I had a choice, but you had the right to decide. And so, I chose you. That's why I offered you this desire for revenge with the same feelings of gratitude. It was thanks to you that I was able to obtain this chance at revenge. I was burning with hatred, yet I could do nothing but wait for death to come. The only thing I have is this desire for revenge that I share with you. Therefore, you may have everything except my revenge.」

「No, I don't need anything like that. Just calm down for now.」

「Ahh~♪ As expected. My lord is a mean person~♪」

Minnalis approached and pushed onto me as she twined herself around my body.
Even though this girl, that is a head shorter than me, has a ragged appearance, she emitted a strangely seductive appeal with her wet eyes and blushed cheeks.

Kufufu~, her bewitchingly smiling face emitted an atmosphere akin to a beast who had found her prey.
Perhaps she was still feeling MP sickness due to the repeated MP consumption and restoration, so her beastkin instincts, that had been restrained by her reasoning, clearly manifested.

(She'll return to normal in a bit, perhaps her unusual sex appeal will recede as well when she's calmer.)

There's no problem with ignoring her when she's drunk, and it'd be a pain to care for her otherwise.

「Let's go, this is only the first part of your revenge. Our revenge has only just begun. Set aside your gratitude until our revenge is complete because these sacrifices are not enough to satisfy my burning hate yet.」

「Yes, it is as you say, master. I still haven't used my power's full potential yet. I will try my best to make my cooking even more delicious. Kufufu~, ahh, I can't stop having wild ideas!!」

(…Will she, turn back to normal? Is it possible that she will be in this mood every day because of the various things she has suffered through…?)

I was somewhat concerned about Minnalis' condition as we left the building. Noon had just arrived, so it seemed a fair bit of time had passed by. In this world, clocks are expensive, so to tell the time, one would listen to the church bells that rang three times a day. Otherwise, one would have no choice but to attempt to tell the time by using the sun's position.
Confirming that Minnalis was by my side, we walked along the main street, deciding to buy her clothes for the time being.

「Can you hide your ears and tail? If it is unreasonable, then we will buy clothes in the slums to hide them before going to the main street.」

「I've recovered quite a lot of my MP, so I can hide them with an illusion.」

Skillfully using her magic with ease, in but a moment, her long rabbit ears and tail faded away.
Even with assistance from『Illusion Magic Lv3』, performing chantless magic is many times more difficult; her ability is nothing to scoff at.

「……」

「Hya!? M-my lord!?」

From some time earlier, I realized I had been touching around the area where her rabbit ears were. I groped around until I began to feel a wonderfully soft and fluffy feeling in my hands.

「N~, ah-, no-, not in a place like this…」

「Ah, my bad. I was just curious.」

I came to my senses and removed my hand due to Minnalis' soft coquettish voice.

The first time I defeated the demons, the only thing I had in my mind was to kill the Demon Lord and return to my original world. Thinking back, it was quite a waste of time.

「Which reminds me, I haven't talked about what we'll be doing from now on. I plan to leave this town by the end of today.」

「Huff~, huff~, today?」

Minnalis adjusted her breathing while looking at the sky, saying so in a dubious voice.

That reaction was to be expected. In an hour, the sun was going to set.

The town's traffic management at the North, South, East, and West gates will all be closed at sundown, making it impossible to enter or exit town.
Furthermore, because it takes about half a day to the nearest town after exiting the gates, barely anyone leaves town after noon has passed.

「From my past experiences, my targets for revenge are numerous. This country's Princess, the King, the Queen, and the Knight Company too, I think? Though, I already made light greetings with the princess and knights. Probably around this time tomorrow, those guys will be able to speak, so I want to be able to leave this town by the end of the day because I don't have enough power yet and there is no time to relax. Ah, on that subject, what do you think of my last moments from my past?」

The Holy Sword of Vengeance doesn't allow her to relive every memory, so she shouldn't know about my memories ever since my second run-through started. But if that's the case, then…

「Err, eh? Come to think of it, my lord, are you a ghost? Or a hero? A public menace?? What exactly is this memory…」

「Oh, so it ended at the part where you were killed as well? It's that way for me too, only the important experiences are left. For the time being, there are still a lot of things that need to be explained, so for now, let's go.」

Listening to me, she just nodded in confusion.

「I see. So we just need to buy enough food and clothes to get out of town early.」

「Hm? Oh, no, you don't have to hurry because I'm not planning to leave until nightfall. More importantly, you accepted the royalty as our enemy more readily than I thought you would.」

The Royal Family that is considered to be the absolute reigning body of this country has turned into the enemy. It is the same as making enemies with the entire nation.

「Well, certainly, it was a little surprising at first, but because of your past experiences, we know who the enemy is this time. It doesn't matter who our enemy is as we've decided to get our revenge on all of them, right? Regardless, be it the King, the Princess, the Queen, or the knights, what we have to do hasn't changed.」

Seeming to become excited when it was said that we would be turning against the entire country, she ended up smiling.

「…Ah, you got me there. I said something unnecessary. Indeed, I'm pleased that I've got you as my accomplice.」

It seems that somewhere inside me, I had still been making light of her. Her will had shown me that she was suitable as my accomplice.

「Ah! Yes, I'm also happy that I was selected by you, my lord, as an accomplice.」

For a moment, Minnalis had an embarrassed expression, but she immediately glossed over it with a smile. Her MP drunkenness must have worn off.

「For now, we have to deal with clothing. Since the features of the beastkin can be hidden, then we need to prepare clothes, weapons, and of course, food.」

「How will we leave in the evening, the gates will be closing soon, right?」

「Oh? You don't have to worry about the gates closing because there is a small hole in the walls that we can escape from.」

「There's a hole in the ramparts? But…」

Minnalis asked in puzzlement.

Since the castle walls are meant to protect from demon invasions, it's a big problem if there's a hole. That's why the walls have multiple layers of self-repair magic to prevent degradation; a hole that people can pass through wasn't something someone would think of.

「Be at ease. At this point in time, all you need to do is poke the walls a little and they'll collapse. I know that fully well.」

Chapter 18
The Hero will help a bit 2

「Such wonderful clothes, is it really alright for me to wear them?」

With the streets of the Royal Capital dyed with the evening sun, Minnalis had changed from wearing her old rags, which, as slave clothing, only had holes to fit one's head and arms, to wearing light clothes from a thrift store.

Though Minnalis said they were wonderful, in truth, it was only slightly better than what people casually wear.
So Minnalis meant that it was better than the slave clothes she had been wearing, not that was incredibly happy because they were wonderful. Incidentally, I had also changed into clothes suitable for a regular townsfolk.

「It's fine because you are beautiful. In this country, we need to hide your ears and tail because grandly displaying those will only attract trash nobles and random idiots.」

I remembered something unpleasant, so I just spat out what was on my mind.

Slaves are generally treated as "things."
Therefore, when trash nobles see "good things" next to commoners, they try to forcibly make them their own to show off their money and power. There are also those who abused their own power to extort money and acting like hoodlums.

During the first run-through, I had disputes with low-lives like that who were only out to satisfy their own greed. At that time, I met an aristocrat who didn't even try to hide his greed yet was really good at saving his own neck.

Returning to the conversation, said hoodlums rarely frequent the main street, so there will be few problems. However, if we get involved with the nobles, that will be a problem. Starting a fight which would make us stand out is out of the question. I prefer to be less conspicuous.

Thanks to the forceful recovery from the potion, the pitiful bruises all over her body vanished. Her black eye vanished as well. Her cheeks might be hollow, but ignoring that unhealthy look, she was still on a level of considerable beauty.
Even without the prejudice towards beastkin, if her being a slave was exposed, the possibility of being entangled with nobles was still quite high.

「…… Beautiful? I am… beautiful?! Kufu~, Kufufufu~」

「Hmm? What's wrong? Are there any adverse effects from using the potions to forcibly heal yourself?」

Suddenly, Minnalis stopped walking, and turned her face away while trembling, then spoke in a low voice.
Since HP potions restore the body's vitality, in the same vein, willpower is restored with MP potions. So "stamina" is also recovered. However, Minnalis' weakened condition was not an abnormal state caused by magic or poison, it was instead due to being exposed to a harsh environment. It was not something that can simply be removed with potions.

To recover from this weakness, one needs to sleep well and eat nutritious food. Otherwise, the weakness from this abnormal state will continue. Incidentally, a beastkin with advanced physical abilities can recover from this weakened state in a mere three days.

「Sorry, but please endure until we reach the item shop. Even if an abnormal status potion is ineffective, it will become little easier with a relief potion to reduce the effects. We cannot relax until we leave town.」

Even if I said to drink a potion, its effects were varied.
For example, there are ones that recover HP and MP, ones that temporarily raises one's status, ones that decrease one's status instead, ones that nullify abnormal states for a fixed period of time, ones that assist skills by strengthening senses, and ones that have some combination of those effects.
Among the potions concerning abnormal statuses, medicine that targets the source and helps one recover from said abnormal statuses belong to the『Recovery system』, and those help weaken the effects of abnormal statuses. Potions of the『Relief system』on the other hand, are more like first-aid.

In her current state, potions from the relief system should be effective on Minnalis. It is only a symptomatic treatment, but it should be able to take effect quite easily.

Or so I was thinking, but Minnalis shook her head as if to say that she was all right.

「No, my body is not in a bad enough state where a potion is necessary. Sure, I do feel a little heavy, but it seems killing those goblins were treated as if I defeated them, so I leveled up. With that, I should be fine within a day.」

Saying that, Minnalis showed a thin smile. But her expression was different, her delicate face reddened.
Sure, something was definitely a little off, but it didn't seem like she would accept the potion either way.
This is bad, do I have to force her to drink one again? And while thinking that, I tried to match Minnalis' pace as we walked.

While we were walking I was worried about Minnalis as she seemed to be restless. Certainly, only that much doesn't seem to be a problem. As usual, she showed a perfect smile when she turned her face my way. Although her complexion hasn't returned to normal, it doesn't seem to hinder her very much.

Because we can't rest immediately after leaving town, we'll have to use a relief potion as expected, and while thinking that it was better to buy a little bit more, we stopped by an item shop.

There, we bought some low-grade HP potions, MP potions, every type of relief potion for status abnormality recovery, food and water to last us a few days, and a large amount of seasonings.

「Here, a relief potion for your weakened status. Drink it.」

「N-no, I'm fine. I can't take something that expensive.」

「… Just drink it. Don't give me extra work.」

Sure enough, since Minnalis didn't want to take the potion, I ordered as her master for the first time.

I didn't use the slave crest to compel the weakened Minnalis. In the first place, using pain to make somebody obey is something I absolutely despised. However, since it will be troubling if she resists, I narrowed my eyes a little, lowered my voice, and more or less coerced her in a serious manner.

Now that Minnalis has become my accomplice and has shared desires of revenge with me, she should not be afraid of such coercion that lacks even a fragment of hostility; I want to believe that what I asserted was somewhat out of dignity.

「I am really sorry. I will drink it.」

Finally, Minnalis received the potion. It's not much, but Minnalis looked somewhat awed while drinking it.

For the time being, I checked Minnalis' status, and what was written on the weakened status has changed. Its effects had decreased from a half to a third. Though her complexion again turned red, it seemed to me that walking to our next destination will pose no issue.

The next store we went to was a weapons and armor shop.
I'm fine because I can fight with the soul sword, but it was necessary to buy a weapon for Minnalis and armor for both of us.

Due to the nature of a beastkin's magical power, it's probably best for Minnalis to specialize in close-range combat. That said, there's no need for her to fight unarmed. Even without the beastkin's status, the unique skill Minnalis had obtained, just by looking at its name, was obviously one that inflicts an abnormal condition. Since that's the case, it seems a lot better to use it in combination with slashing-centric swords rather than striking-centric fists.

「Minnalis, do you know how to use any weapons?」

Even though she didn't obtain any other skills, I thought that there may be room for her to learn skills with weapons considering that she had an affinity for a Unique Skill. Though I said unarmed, there are other options like using a talon too. There are many ways to fight, so I want to choose an easy-to-use weapon for starters.

「Um, about that, I only somewhat learned how to swing one from playing with the adventurers who came to the village while escorting merchants… I'm really sorry.」

「Hm? It's not really something you need to apologize for. It's fine because you can still learn. In the first place, I didn't buy you because you are already strong. It was enough that you satisfied the requirements that I wanted from an accomplice.」

With that, they reached the Weapons and Armor shop.
The store, which was close to the border between the main streets and the slums, had a motley—*read as ratty*—but still warm appearance, and it had a sign out front that was carved from wood with "Rishall Weapons and Armor" written on it.

「Hm, oh, welcome! I'm sorry, but I'm closing soon. You won't have much time to look around, so how about tomorrow…」

There was an apprentice looking after the shop at the storefront.
Certainly, night was approaching with the sun starting to set. Stores still open were starting to turn on their lights.

「No, we have already decided on what we want. We won't be long since we're not after anything special, and we need it before the day is over.」

「If that's the case… Old man!! There are some customers!!」

Minnalis curiously looked around the shop while the boy who had been instructed to close loudly called for the store owner.

「Haaa!? Send them away! Whether they want weapons or armor, if they take their time choosing, we wouldn't be able to eat our dinner!」

「Seems that they already decided on what to buy!!」

「Then shouldn't you just sell it!? Once you're done, hurry up and close the store!!」

The old store owner seemed to be working at the back of the shop. The boy that had been yelling turned around and came to ask us.

「Then, what did you want?」

「Two sets of armor for beginner adventurers, four sets of repair tools, and also regular longswords and sheaths. And please pick out ten appropriate ones.」

「That many? I'm sorry, but do you have enough money?」

The boy glanced at me in doubt. To afford what we had just requested, we needed more than an average person's monthly salary(roughly two large silver coins). It's obvious that he doubted us since we currently looked like commoners.
Next to Minnalis, I felt a hint of anger rising within her, so in order to hold it down, I decided to speak up first.

「Don't worry, here.」

As I said that, I took out one gold coin from a bag and showed it to him, and upon seeing it, the boy was then stared in shock and apologized.

「Is that… gold?! I-I'm sorry, I've said something ru-, something rude…」

「Yes, I just had some money come in recently, so my purse is a little heavy. I'm neither a noble, nor do I work for someone wealthy. So please don't worry about it.」

He probably misunderstood and thought that I was working for an aristocrat or someone wealthy when he saw me take out a gold coin (Though my clothes shouldn't have given that impression).

There were, of course, people who maliciously used the influence of their proprietors. If you took the wrong approach to them, you would be set in the sights of said nobles or wealthy men; it was well-known for the normal townsfolk to not get on their bad sides.

「R-really?」

「Really really.」

I jokingly said that and the boy sighed in relief as the atmosphere inside seemed to have loosened up.

「Ah, still, I'm sorry for doubting you. I will bring everything out right away. Two sets of armor for beginner adventurers, four sets of repair tools, and ten regular longswords and sheaths, right?」

「Right, then please.」

The boy hurriedly brought the necessary items from inside the store and placed them on top of the counter.

「Here, two sets of armor, four sets of repair tools, and ten regular longswords and sheaths. Five silver coins are two large silver coins and two large copper coins is four… seven, no, eight after that is one silver and five big coppers. So… O-ow!? That hurts!! 」

With a dull sound, the boy was struck in the head by a brusque fist while he was desperately calculating the value of the coins.

「How long are you going to take? A calculation like that should be done immediately you moron!」

「Even so, hitting me won't do anything!! If you hit me too much, I might become even dumber, you know!!」

「Are you arguing with me, you stupid brat!?」

「Owwww!!」

A really slow, old-fashioned blacksmith emerged from further inside the shop.
He had a rough-looking muscular body with a stern face and had a beard which was probably caused by the dwarven genes that constituted a quarter of his blood.

「Customer, was there anything else you required?」

It only showed a little, but Minnalis was perceptive enough to notice the fragments of both happiness and sadness from the befuddled emotions I somehow showed.

Because of me, these two were put to death by the princess in my first run-through. During the first time, the princess had hidden country's absolute contempt towards people other than their own from me. I had mentioned their dwarven heritage in passing, and it seems that they were killed without my knowledge.
At that time, I wholly believed that they only returned to their hometown as the princess had told me.

In the first place, other than a dwarf's small physique and beard, they didn't have any other defining characteristics. In addition, because of how diluted their dwarven blood was, you wouldn't be able to differentiate the shopkeeper and his son from regular humans.

At how dumbfounded I was, the princess sneered at me, saying that it was all thanks to me that she was able to discover them which saved her the trouble of finding the hidden trash.

In truth, I knew it was better not to go here. Even so, I couldn't *not* confirm the existence of the two of them.
I also understood that it was just my cheap sentiments, but if at that time they were alive, if they went against everyone and did not turn into my enemies, I would know that, at the very least, they did not betray me last time.

I deeply resented this country, but it was obviously my fault that I was betrayed and got them killed in the previous run-through. So the idea of apologizing swelled within me.

That emotion swelled in great amounts. It seemed that the shared thirst for vengeance was why Minnalis sensed this. In the first place, I did not know if Minnalis was that sensitive in that regard.

「Hm, no, nothing.」

I answered with a single phrase as I shook my head.

「According to what's on the table, it's a total of two large silver coins, five silver coins, and eight large copper coins. The armor made of hide has a fastener used to adjust the size. If it does not fit you, you can pay for it to be adjusted for one silver coin. I wonder why you wanted to buy ten long swords, but if the swords are damaged beyond repair, then those repair kits will be rendered useless. If that does happen, it can still be roughly restored for one silver coin. Aside from that, do you want to hear anything else?」

「No, it's fine. Can we put on the armor here? Anyhow, we have no other places to go to and we're also carrying a baggage, you see.」

I said, as I placed the last gold coin on the table and received large silver coins and regular silver coins as change.

「I don't mind. If you don't know how to do it, shall I teach you?」

「I already know how so it should be fine. And I can teach her too. It shouldn't be that hard.」

The sets of armor composed of average hide armor plus waist armor while the leggings and the gauntlets were made of iron along with the same hide.

After quickly putting mine on, I helped Minnalis wear whatever she didn't know how to equip.
Though the shopkeeper and attendant wanted to help, Minnalis refused. It's not like the illusion would cease to function when disturbed, but it's still better to prevent being found out regardless.

I didn't think that this father and son will change just from that, but it was better for them to not know. They were really friendly, and I believe that even if they knew about our circumstances, they wouldn't turn into our enemies.

「Uhh… My Lo-… Kaito-san, the chest, it's a little tight.」

「Ah. Not good. It seems I've put more force than necessary.」

While thinking about some things, I unintentionally tightened her armor too much. And her large breasts were emphasized by the pressure.
In my confusion, I loosened my grip, and from the side, the shopkeeper patted my shoulder and raised his thumb with his other hand.

「Good job!」

「Shut up you perverted old man!! Your son is in front of you so restrain yourself!!」

「??? What did you say? What did you say was in front of me?」[1]

Even in front of his son, he's still the same as the one from the first run-through, a self-destructing old man. That's why I was able to quickly get on friendly terms with him, but if not for this, his good points as a perfectly cool blacksmith regrettably need to be thoroughly reviewed.

Finally, Minnalis' equipment was put in order, and out of the ten swords, Minnalis equipped two of them. The rest were to be brought bound with a cord.

「I'm sorry for intruding on you while you were closing up shop. Ah, right, as recompense, I'll give you an advice. I still don't know the reason, but the price for antidotes might suddenly rise from now on, so if you can, try to stock up on those.」

「Hm, is that so? I will take it to heart then.」

「Haha, well if that's the case, then good… By the way, I'm sorry for the first run-through.」

「Huh? What are you talking about?」

「No, it's nothing. Just setting something straight. Well then, stay in good health.」

I said so to the shopkeeper who had a strange look on his face, then took Minnalis with me out the shop. Outside, the sun had almost set.

「I will carry the bags since I am a slave.」

「No, we don't want you to be found out as a slave.」

「Even if it's not as a slave, I still want to at least carry things…」

「No, having a girl carry heavy luggage while I stay empty-handed will be too conspicuous. Besides, I will carry the bags while you'll be carrying the food. That should be good already.」

Minnalis looked a little troubled after I said that, but I ignored it.

I need to help her remove that part of her thinking about always looking at our relationship as master and slave. I'd be troubled if she stayed thinking she's below me forever.

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[1] [Deus Ex: Penis joke? If you watched enough Gintama you will realize that Kaito used the word musuko 息子 = son, given a different meaning by the shopkeeper むすこ = penis then.]

Minnalis wasn't just a slave, she was my accomplice, the same level as someone to discuss plans with. It will trouble me if she became a pawn who only did what she was told.

All the more after that magnificent display of revenge. We'll just have to keep adjusting our sense of distance from here on to maintain it.

「Anyway, this means we have everything we need. Watch your surroundings; we're leaving town.」